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SPANISH PROSE
AND POETRY
OLD AND NEW

WITH TRANSLATED SPECIMENS

BY

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY FATHER AND MOTHER
JOHN WILSON AND HARRIOT FARNELL

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INTRODUCTION

A WELL-KNOWN contemporary Spanish writer has complained that the average foreigner associates Spain with little beyond religious fanaticism, bull-fights, and dances. Even of the more enlightened, who are aware of her past literary achievements, few, he says, realize that her literature is a living and progressive one, and that there exists in Spain a youth in close touch with the best European thought. That an observation of this kind has been largely true with regard to the English none, I think, will deny ; but there is now good reason to believe that this indifference towards things Spanish is coming to an end. It is probable (how can it be otherwise?) that though peace has come we shall find it psychologically impossible to overcome our repugnance to Germans, with their crimes and moral outlook, sufficiently to enter into social relations with them. We shall, perhaps, also arrive at seeing that in literature, as in other subjects, we have too readily taken the Germans at their own estimate ; that the number of works produced by them of first-class importance is extremely small, while those belonging to the second or third class are frequently dull and clumsy. When we thus realize that we have overrated German as a means of education, we shall turn, let us hope, the more willingly to the literature of the great Latin races, and be mindful of Italian, too long out of vogue, and of Spanish, too long neglected.

As to this latter, professorships have recently been founded in our universities, which will necessarily lead to a steady increase in the number of those acquainted with Spanish originals. It is, however, for the many who have no leisure for learning Spanish itself that this little book is intended. Its aims are simple. It has been given me, after years of work in other directions, to arrive at knowing a little of the great

Iberian peninsula and its literature. I have revelled in its scenery, its architecture and painting, spent many happy hours in its ancient libraries, spoken with its people, and enjoyed much of Spanish courtesy and hospitality. Having in this manner received abiding impressions of the kind that help to enrich and beautify life, I would gladly convey to English readers something of the high interest and pleasure that Spain has brought to myself. Spanish is a grand language, strong, sonorous, and stately; it is that, moreover, of a people who once led Europe, and who still represent a very considerable portion of the human race. Apart from Cervantes—a life-study in himself—its literature is of singular richness and variety. There are the early epics, the ballads, the splendid drama, the lyrics, the *picaresque* novels of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with those of a more general type of the nineteenth and twentieth.

As to the lyric poets, of whom, together with certain prose writers, I have given critical and biographical sketches with translated specimens, I have chiefly concerned myself with those either wholly untranslated or at any rate but little known in our country. The first of these is Juan Ruiz, one of the least known amongst us, and it is owing to this fact partly that I have given him a space in my book out of proportion to that allotted to men greater than he. Moreover, he is the representative fourteenth-century poet, and his voluminous book, with its various elements, requires a fair number of specimens adequately to illustrate it. Other poets in my collection are undoubtedly among the finest that Spain has produced, and the specimens I have given of them are, with one or two exceptions, to be found either in Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly's *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, or among *The Hundred Best Poems*, selected by the late Professor Menéndez y Pelayo. Of these there are, as will be seen, notable omissions. Jorge Manrique's exquisite poem on death, one of the brightest jewels in Spanish literature, has been many years ago beautifully rendered into English by Longfellow, while Lockhart and others have given us fine versions

of the Ballads. Poems, the beauty of which is mainly that of form, and whose subtle cadences are peculiarly Spanish, are obviously best left among the unattempted. Moreover, verse-translation cannot be done to order. Before one can hope to obtain any measure of success it is necessary that the original should possess itself of one's heart and brain and warm them up to the work. It is for this reason that in spite of their literary importance I have felt unable to translate either Gongora or Quevedo. The eighteenth century, when Spanish poetry, largely owing to the pernicious influence of Gongorism, the Spanish equivalent of Euphuism, was at its lowest ebb, is unrepresented here.

In my renderings I have endeavoured to keep as closely to the text as the great difference between English and Spanish permits; but I have in all cases sought to be true to the spirit rather than to the letter of the originals. I have adhered as much as possible to their metre and rhyming-systems, even though, as Chaucer complains: 'Ryme in Englisch hath such skarsetë.'

Spanish lyric poetry was a late development, and the fact must be realized that in Castile there co-existed for about 150 years a lyric poetry in the Galician language and an epic poetry in the Castilian. The Galicians, Celtic in race and imaginative in temperament, showed themselves in the earlier ages lyrically more gifted than the solid and sober-minded Castilians. Their language, as well as Portuguese, is closely akin to that of Provence, the higher civilization of which came to them through their proximity to it, as also through the enormous number of pilgrims whom the famous shrine of Santiago de Compostela attracted. In Galician wrote Alfonso the Learned and Alfonso XI; the famous 'Cantigas', attributed by some to the former, are in this tongue, nor was it till near the middle of the fifteenth century that the supremacy of Castilian as a language became definitely established.

The influence of Provençal poetry seems chiefly to have reached Spain indirectly through Galicia, but it also came from Provence itself when, after the Albigenian War, trouba-

dours found a shelter at the courts of Spanish princes. By then, however, the poetry of the *Langue d'Oc* had fallen into decline, and Spanish imitators of the later troubadours rivalled them in insipidity, though they learnt much from them in the matter of *technique* and versification.

Indirectly again (for were they not the teachers of Dante and Petrarca ?) came the influence of the troubadours through Italy. The commercial intercourse between Genoa and Catalonia, and still more the conquest of Naples by Aragon, brought the two countries closely together. Italy became to Spain as Greece to Rome. In the fifteenth century the study of Dante was the chief inspiration from without, while yet more potently in the sixteenth century Italy brought a new impetus to Spain—Petrarca and others taught her poets how to sing of love, and gave a new delicacy and variety to their verse. Spain proved an apt pupil, and, in poetry as in art, where she borrows she shows a special gift for reflecting with originality the inspiration of others.

The genius of Spain is not pre-eminently lyrical, and love has not been the theme of her best poetry. The innumerable love-poems of Provence and Italy are not to be found among a people whose idealism has so strong an admixture of realism. Spanish love in its most characteristic form is not the spiritual worship of Dante for Beatrice, nor has it the delicate unearthliness of the troubadour's adoration for his lady. The love of Rodrigo for Ximena is deep and sincere rather than passionate, and it is Ximena who kneels, not he. The best Spanish lyrics seem to me those that dwell on such subjects as religion, patriotism, the mystery of death, or the fleetingness of life. There is a remarkable homogeneity and oneness of tone in both the literature and art of Spain. Even the mystics have their practical side. St. Theresa notably was, though an idealist with her face upturned to heaven, a realist with her feet firmly planted upon earth, and has thus much in her that makes her akin to Cervantes, Velasquez, Goya, or the unknown author of the *Poema del Cid*.

In the few examples of Spanish prose that I have added to

the lyrics I do not, of course, attempt to convey an adequate idea of this branch of literature. They are merely supplementary, and with a view to giving further general impressions of Spanish life and thought. Don Juan Manuel is an important personage, not only for the high intrinsic worth of his *Conde Lucanor*, but because of the Arabic influence traceable in his work. In spite of the existence of Mabbe's beautiful seventeenth-century translation of *La Celestina* I have felt that some extracts from this book, the greatest perhaps after *Don Quixote* in Spanish literature, could hardly be omitted. Various English translations of St. Theresa's prose work, one of the great glories of Spain, already exist, and her life by the late Mrs. Cunninghame Graham is a fine memorial to her. *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the famous book which fixed the type of the *picaresque* novel, has been introduced to English readers by Prof. Butler Clarke. In the nineteenth century, as hitherto in the twentieth, the novel has been the chief form of literature in Spain, and I have preferred to illustrate this by fairly lengthy specimens from two writers than by shorter ones from several. It may perhaps seem strange that I have chosen nothing from novelists of such distinction as Sr. Galdós and Sa. Pardo Bazán. It must be borne in mind, however, that some writers can be less fitly illustrated by detached specimens than others.

We are living in an age when, in spite of all our belief in the future of our race, and the uplifting of our hearts by our Empire's glorious achievements, life is infinitely tragic, and sorrow and grave anxieties encompass us. Therefore we need all the comfort that literature can give us; and if the voices of the great band of singers, dead and living, whom I faintly echo here, can cheer and inspire any of my countrymen the chief purpose of this book will be fulfilled.

IDA FARNELL.

JULY 1919.

JUAN RUIZ

Archpriest of Hita (1283 ?-1350 ?)

The past is as a book sealed with seven seals. Our histories tell us much of battles, treaties, and alliances, but comparatively little of the inner life of men and women. It is the poets who best bridge over the gulf between ourselves and past humanity, and this is markedly so in the case of Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita.

The Archpriest is a genius, but this is not his sole claim to our notice. The historical importance of his poems is perhaps as great as their intrinsic merit. He is beyond question the chief Spanish poet of the fourteenth century ; he is also the first strongly-defined personality in Spanish literature. The author of the *Poema del Cid* is a mere matter of conjecture ; Berceo, the first poet of Spain, whose name has reached us, is as a man vague and shadowy. It is true that Alfonso the Learned is a great historical and literary figure, but he has not, after the manner of Juan Ruiz, laid bare his heart to us, and how much is actually his of the various works attributed to him is a problem difficult of solution.

With the Archpriest we are on firmer ground. Scanty as is our knowledge of the events of his life, we know a surprising amount about the man himself. He has given us his own portrait, robust and virile as the book he has left us, that of a big, burly man, with dark hair, coal-black eyebrows and red lips, pleasant of speech and deep of voice. He has given us his autobiography, the first of its kind in Spain, not to speak of other countries. Whether or not he was Don Melon, and whether or not the hero of the *Serrana* poems, his account of himself seems, as a whole, reliable, and he tells us not only what he did, but what he felt on a vast variety of

subjects. He represents himself as a gay, pleasure-loving, priestly Don Juan, hurrying, though not always with success, from one *amour* to another. His *joie de vivre*, his unfailing good humour, his easy tolerance, are those of a man of sound health and immense vitality. He is of the opinion that all men, including himself, are sinners: but he is on excellent terms with the sinners, and thoroughly convinced of the desirability of life. In spite of his sensuality, the debauchee priest has waves of religious feeling, sincere, it seems, as far as they go, and he is typically mediaeval in his mixture of profanity and religious sentiment. Nevertheless, he was as ill-suited to the clerical life as Fra Filippo Lippi or the merry troubadour-monk of Montaldon, but one must judge him by the age in which he lived, and his morality seems to have been neither more nor less depraved than that of the priests, his contemporaries. The corruption of the Church and the loose lives of the clergy during the Middle Ages are facts well known to the student of that period; and in Spain there were no great religious revivals equal to those in Italy under the wonderful influence of St. Francis and St. Catherine.

Juan is in no way morbidly self-concentrated; he has a large, healthy interest in human nature, and was as much the poet of the men and women of real life as Giotto was their painter. He shows us the fourteenth century as he saw it himself, but in studying his presentation of it we must bear in mind that, though he had the keenest eye for its humorous side, its faults and its follies, the spiritual shallowness of the man made him incapable of realizing the higher side that must, nevertheless, have existed. His book is as full of sunshine as the *Canterbury Tales*, but characters like the Knight or the Parson are beyond the poet's ken. His world is a merry, evil place, and monks and nuns stream forth from their conventual seclusion into the glorious light of a southern spring, and together pay homage to Don Amor. His knights and nobles are without high chivalry, his women, whether secular or religious, without purity.

As for his life, we must content ourselves with probabilities.

It is thought that he was born in 1283, and he died in 1350 or 1351. Alcalá de Henares (1), where Cervantes was born, whom he in some ways resembles, claims also to have been the birthplace of Ruiz. The poet himself tells us that he was Archpriest of Hita, a village on a hill-side not far from Guadalajara. He seems to have spent much of his life in New Castile, and to have been well acquainted with Toledo, of which he makes frequent mention. That he was a true Castilian is a fact borne out by his purity of style and grace of diction. In the course of his career he in some way offended Gil Albornoz, the powerful Archbishop of Toledo, who imprisoned him, and this probably for a period of thirteen years, during which time he seems to have written his book.

The archpriest's contribution to literature is the 'Book of Good Love' (*Libro de buen Amor*), a work of some 7,000 lines, and, like the *Roman de Renart*, not so much a poem as a series of poems, the whole, however, having a connecting thread, and forming one book. It has a singular fascination and charm, partly because, as the late Señor Menéndez y Pelayo remarks, it gives us the 'human comedy of the fourteenth century', but chiefly because it is the product of a genuine artist, who possessed the gift of style, and whose aim was to cheer and delight the reader. It is a protest against gloom and asceticism, the first vigorous assertion of the beauty and worth of life in a country whose tragic history has given a character of melancholy and pessimism to much of its literature. The book is made up of various elements. It reveals its writer as a lyric poet of considerable merit, an accomplished story-teller, and a fabulist equal to La Fontaine himself in grace, satiric power, and closeness of observation. In the Autobiography which joins the short poems together, Juan Ruiz is the founder of the Spanish *picaresque* novel, influencing as such the author of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and through him Le Sage, Fielding, and Smollett.

The Archpriest is never pedantic, never dull. In his spontaneity, ease, gaiety, and power of expression he is a striking contrast to the long-winded poets that had gone

before him; and these qualities, together with his humour and knowledge of life, make him no unworthy predecessor of the great Cervantes. He was as much at home in country life as in that of the towns. He had roamed over the mountain ranges of Castile, and there is the freshness of the mountain breezes in the poems that treat of them. In his art he is essentially a realist, and of the earth, and the remark that has been made about Velasquez, that he saw all that was to be seen with his eyes open, and little with his eyes closed, is largely applicable to the Archpriest. He is a man of many moods, and his views on love, women, and other matters vary according to these moods, his waywardness being in itself a charm. On the whole he took life lightly, and the pagan element is uppermost in him; nevertheless his verses on death and one or two of the religious poems show another side of a curiously complex nature. He certainly took his *art* seriously, and did great service to versification, and to the development and enrichment of the beautiful language of his country. The Archpriest was a man of considerable erudition, though his readings seem to have been wide rather than deep. He was well acquainted with the Apostolic Fathers; he had read, whether in the original or in translations, certain Latin authors, more especially the poet Ovid. He borrows much from the French Trouvères, with whom he has considerable affinity. The Arabic influence is perceptible in him; the construction of the book—a narrative interspersed with fables and apologues—is oriental. In spite, however, of what he owes to outside sources, his originality is incontestable. He pillaged freely, but he has the alchemist's gift of transmuting into gold the baser metal that he took from others, and in the treatment of his subject he is always himself.

The parallel that has been drawn between Juan Ruiz and Chaucer holds good in much, but the tenderness, pathos, purity of sentiment, and spirit of high romance that charm us in our own poet are wholly absent in the Spanish one.

Neglected for some centuries, Juan Ruiz's work was first printed in 1779 by the Spanish professor Sanchez. The best

edition is the palaeographical one of M. Jean Ducamin, published in 1901. The book is almost entirely in verse, usually that of the so-called 'Cuaderna Via' of the Archpriest's predecessors, a stanza, namely, of four monorhyming lines, each of fourteen syllables, the monotony of which is greatly reduced by the freedom and ease with which the poet treats it. The book begins with the following prayer to God for release from prison:

INVOCATION (2)

Great God, who once hast even deigned the Israelites to free,
Leading them forth from Pharaoh's hand and long captivity,
Thou Saviour of wise Daniel, that placed his trust in Thee,
Eke from this dark and evil cell release unhappy me.

Lord, unto gentle Esther once Thou gavest pitying grace,
So that Ahasuerus looked with favour on her face:
Even so, Lord, I pray thee grant to *me* Thy saving grace,
And free me from this prison—from this foul and noisome place.

Thou from the fiery furnace, Lord, Thy servants hast released,
So that the three came forth unsinged, and persecution ceased;
As Peter from the roaring waves, save Thou Thy last and least,
O, rescue, Lord, from grievous teen, rescue Thine own arch-
priest.

A preface in prose comes next, a solemn homily on *Good Love* (3) designed perhaps for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of his readers. 'To love aright, three things', he tells us, 'are necessary: understanding, will, and memory.' 'Wherefore', he continues, 'I with my small knowledge and great simplicity, loving with a right good will the salvation of my soul, made this writing as a record of virtue . . . wherein also are set down certain cunning wiles of the foolish love of the world, whereby some do even fall into sin.' After further pious utterances, in which he expresses his abhorrence of vice, he says: 'Nathless, if any there be, that seek after unlawful love, the which I in no wise counsel them, here they will find ensamples thereof . . . for, as saith St. Gregory, "The more ye see the darts of the evil one, the better ye can shun

them." Thereupon follows a prayer to God to inspire him in the making of his book. So prayed our own high-souled Milton and great Dante, and whether such a prayer is in this case wholly impious it is hard to say.

After his prayer, uneasy as to the reception of the questionable book, the poet continues to apologize and explain, saying:

Think not my book containeth naught but folly vain and bold,
Nor deem that jest and mockery are all its pages hold;
For, as in roughest leather purse may lie the purest gold,
E'en so a book of semblance base great wisdom may enfold.

Two poems now follow on the Joys of the Virgin Mary, as the 'Source and Root of all things good'. But, remarks the Archpriest, 'Cato bids men mingle with their many cares a little merriment and laughter,' upon which he tells us in flowing verse the following amusing story, of which I give the substance in prose.

STORY OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS¹

The Romans (4) being without laws, besought the Greeks in their wisdom to frame them some. 'Nay,' said the Greeks, 'that were great folly, seeing that ye are small of worth and understanding. Nathless, if have them ye must, prove your worth and wit by a disputation with our wise men. (This they said in their subtlety, thinking to evade the matter.) The Romans answered that this pleased them well, and a day was straightway appointed for the disputation; and, inasmuch as the Romans knew not the Greek tongue, it was ordained that signs should take the place of words in the disputation.

Then the Romans were sore perplexed, in that they were unlettered and unskilled in contending with men of wisdom. Being thus hard bestead, they followed the counsel of one of their citizens, and made choice of a certain ribald churl to dispute for them, trusting that God would even instruct him in the signs that he should make. He was a big, bold fellow, and they set on him fine clothes, as though he had been a Doctor of Philosophy, and he got him into a high chair,

¹ Ducamin ed., p. 15.

such as doctors use, and with much insolence challenged the Greeks to arguments with him. Straightway there came forth a Greek doctor, chosen of his people for his great excellence and polished wit, and he got him into another raised chair, and sat him down and all his people round him. Then, ere long, the wise Greek in solemn and seemly fashion slowly uplifted his forefinger and sat him down again, and at that the ribald churl, as one ill-pleased, raised his thumb and two fingers, and held them towards the Greek, and thereon sat him down, eyeing the fine clothes he wore. The Greek at this arose, and held out an open palm and sat down in his wisdom, the while the foolish churl, rising, showed his great fist fast clenched. Thereat incontinently the wise Greek spake and said: 'Verily the Romans are worthy of laws, nor may I therein gainsay them.' And at this they all rose calmly, and as men of one mind, and the Romans received great honour by means of a low rascal.

Then all asked of the wise Greek that he should interpret the signs he had made, and the answer given him, and the Greek spake and said: 'Behold I said that there is one God, and the Roman answered that there is one God in Three Persons. Then I said that all things obey God's will, and he gave answer that God has the whole world beneath his dominion, by the which signs I verily perceived that the men of Rome acknowledged the Holy Trinity, and were worthy of good laws.' Thereon they bade the churl likewise interpret the signs made. Quoth he: 'With his forefinger raised the Greek told me that he would dash out my eye, whereat, full wroth, I answered that with two fingers I would put out his eyes, and with my thumb his teeth. Then he told me that he was minded to deal me a sounding blow on the ears. Quoth I that I would give him such a buffet with my fist as he had never yet known in his life; and he, seeing that he could not withstand me, ceased to contend with me, whereat I held him in great scorn.'

The moral of this story is, says Juan, that there are no words that in themselves are evil, all depends on how they are taken. His book, he assures us, is the father of all instruments, and as the reader points the music so it will be.

Here, without more ado, the Archpriest begins to tell us of his admiration for a fair lady, to whom he sends an old woman as his messenger. The lady defends herself from his addresses

by relating various fables, tending to show the small worth of lovers' promises. She tells with much spirit one, of which the substance is as follows : (5).

A certain lion lay sick and suffering, and the beasts all paid him visits of condolence. When convalescent he invited them to a feast. An ox was the *pièce de résistance*, and the monarch bade the wolf give to each beast his share. The wolf, who was not conspicuous for ready tact, placed before his host the delicate portion suitable to an invalid appetite, keeping for himself and friends the parts of greater substance.

At this the lion was wroth, for he was looking for a good square meal, and, raising his paw with the apparent intention of saying grace, dealt the wolf such a buffet on the head that he carried off his ear, and indeed no mean portion of the scalp. He then commanded the vixen to act as dispenser. Of course the cunning beast gave the major part to the lion, who in high good humour said to her : ' Good mother, who taught you how to make division so skilful and so just ? ' ' Sire,' she said, ' it is the wolf's head so please you, that taught me my lesson.'

' Away with you then, false messenger,' said the lady, ' lest I show you how the lion chastiseth.'

The poet, notwithstanding her rejection of him, writes thus on women :

THE ARCHPRIEST ON WOMEN¹

Surely when God created man He hath in wisdom seen
That woman would not be his bane, else had she never been ;
God brought her forth from Adam's side, and fashioned her,
I ween,
That she should be his well-loved mate, noble and fair of
mien.

And if man loved not woman well, as God did c'en ordain,
Then poor, forsooth, would be Love's joys, and small would
be his reign ;
Methinks there is no hermit saint that would not hold it gain
To have her dear companionship, and dwell 'neath Love's
sweet chain.

¹ Ducamin, p. 26, verses 109-111.

These words I say and say again, e'en as a twice-told tale :
 Unless the hen be in the nest full ill doth sing the male ;
 A house without a woman is a mast without a sail,
 And when there is no water-wheel the parchèd orchards fail. (6)

The poet then pays court to another lady, but here again bad luck attends him, for the lady, as in the case of Miles Standish, prefers the messenger, a young man, to himself. Still the Archpriest persists in thinking well of Don Love, and in the following verses seeks to show that he brings out what is best in a man :

IN PRAISE OF LOVE¹

Truly my mother bore me 'neath the sign of Venus fair,
 Know, therefore, that to serve good dames is aye my chiefest
 care ;

And if the pear-tree I must see yet never taste the pear,
 To rest at least beneath its shade is bliss that all may share.

Love to the foolish giveth wit by great and potent art,
 Love to the dumb or slow of speech can eloquence impart,
 Can make the craven, shrinking coward valiant and strong of
 heart,

Can by his power the sluggard spur out of his sleep to start.

Love to the young eternal youth can by his craft bestow,
 The all-subduing might of eld can even overthrow ;
 Can make the face as swart as pitch full white and fair to
 grow,

And give to those not worth a doit full many a grace, I trow.

The dolt, the fool, the slow of wit, the poor man or the base
 Unto his mistress seemeth rich in every goodly grace.

Then he that loseth lady fair should straightway set his face
 T'ward finding one that worthily may fill her vacant place.

At length the poet, still unsuccessful in his quest of a lady, loses patience and makes a spirited attack on Love, here, as in Provençal poetry, represented as a young man.

¹ Ducamin, p. 33, verses 154, 156; 157, 159.

THE ARCHPRIEST'S CONDEMNATION OF LOVE¹

Now wit ye well, a fierce dispute must needs arise one night,
When heated, not with wine but wrath, I wept my hapless
plight.

There came to me a beauteous youth, of build full tall and
slight,
The which, when questioned, answered me that he Don Amor
hight.

Then by my wrath o'ermasterèd, I thus began to say :
'Now verily, if Love thou be, I bid thee go thy way ;
For thou art full of craft and guile, a liar by my fay ;
No captive wilt thou ever spare, and thousands dost thou slay.

Thou dealst in frauds and flatteries with many a subtle lie,
And eke thy tongue is venomous, none may its power aby ;
Thou 'gainst thy servants, cruel one, thine arrows lettest
fly,
He whom thou hatest, reft of love, perforce must pine and
sigh.

Ah me ! Full many a lovelorn wretch delirious thou makest ;
And thou wouldst rob him of his sleep, his food and drink
thou takest ;
For whoso put their trust in thee thou speedily forsakest,
And these both soul and body lose ; e'en so thy wrath thou
slakest.

They that by thee are captive made in grievous straits remain ;
Thou holdest them from day to day in durance and in pain ;
Dearly their folly must they rue that languish in thy train ;
A weary journey needs must go, small pleasure thereby gain.

And such thy rancour and thy spite that where thou dealest
blow
The wound no balsam e'er can heal that leech's art may know,
And howsoever strong of arm and stout of heart thy foe,
Him with thy might that none resist full soon thou canst
o'erthrow.'

The Archpriest proceeds to show how Love is the root of all
the seven deadly sins, enforcing his argument by various apo-
logues, whereupon Love warns him of the danger of declaring

¹ Ducamin, p. 37, verses 181-7.

enmity against him, and bids him speedily seek a lady to his mind. In this matter he must give good heed as to the choice of a messenger, and there follows the description of one who would best suit his purpose, the 'Trotta-Conventos', who plays such an important part in the book, and whom the *Celestina* of a later date resembles in all essentials. 'Let her', says Love (I give the substance merely), 'be subtle of speech and of understanding, skilled, moreover, in fair-sounding lies, for with a good lid the kettle boils the better. If without kinswoman to thy purpose, take one of those who visit the churches with great rosaries round their necks, the which tell their beads and loudly lament their sore afflictions. Oh, how much wickedness do these old wantons know! Take one of those that cull herbs, and go from house to house calling themselves midwives; these bring with them powder, cosmetics, and phials, the better to lure and deceive young maidens. (7)

'See also that, together with much patient service, thou be a liberal giver, for 'tis money that makes the world go round.'

Here are placed these verses :

ON THE POWER OF MONEY.¹

The ignorant churl that knoweth naught but how to plough
the earth,
By money gaineth wisdom, gaineth rank and gentle birth;
The fuller are the money-bags, the greater is his worth,
But none may count him master when of gold there is a dearth.
If thou but have great store of gold all will with thee be well;
And with the Pope's full favour thou wilt in gladness dwell;
For gold they'll sell thee Paradise, thy soul's salvation sell,
For gold a man may win him grace, and 'scape the pains of
Hell.

Whilom I saw in Rome's high court, of holiness the seat,
That all with full great humbleness the man of riches greet;
I saw that all men honoured him, and bowed before his feet,
And paid him homage as, methought, to royal state were
meet.

¹ Ducamin, p. 89, verses 491-4 and 505.

I marked how gold made abbots, and eke priors and bishops
 high,
 Archbishops, doctors, patriarchs, and gave great dignity ;
 Marked how good gold for witless clerks a benefice might buy,
 Converting every lie to truth, and every truth to lie.

Behold, howbeit of God they prate, full many a monk and
 friar
 By worldliness and avarice will prove himself a liar ;
 And when death striketh down the rich, with greed that
 naught can tire,
 To win from them their goods and pelf, lo, one and all con-
 spire !

The astonishing audacity with which the vices of the Church
 are attacked is well known to all readers of mediaeval litera-
 ture. More than a century before the Archpriest, the trouba-
 dour, Peire Cardinal, at the very time when St. Francis was
 making Lady Poverty his bride, thus writes of clerical
 avarice :

Vultures fierce and kites, I ween,
 Scent not rotting flesh so well
 As the priests and friars keen
 Scent the rich where'er they dwell ;
 Soon the rich man's love they gain,
 Then if sickness, grief, or pain
 Fall on him, great gifts they win,
 Robbing thus his kith and kin.¹

The Archpriest then betakes himself to 'Lady Venus', who,
 together with Love, as he declares, reigns over all things.
 He tells her that a certain Doña Èndrina (a young widow)
 has pierced his heart with Love's arrow. Lady Venus bids
 him take courage, and not despair too easily, for, says she :

Bethink thee, how full many a time the eager chapman
 sweareth
 His goods shall ne'er be sold too cheap, and yet how oft it
 fareth
 That patient buyer by his craft his long denial outweareth,
 And the good merchandise at length in triumph with him
 beareth.²

¹ See *Lives of the Troubadours*, Ida Farnell, p. 218.

² Ducamin, stanza 615.

The poet meets his lady in the market-place, and thus tells of her : ¹

Methought that Dame Endrina's face was lovely past all praise,
As through the street with stately grace she went upon her
ways;

Ah me! her heron's neck, her locks, her lips my soul amaze,
With Love's keen darts she pierceth when her bright orbs she
doth raise.

Yet such a place were all unmeet for love to tell his tale;
And overborne by grievous fears my courage 'gan to fail,
My hands and feet lost power to move, I needs must quake
and quail,
My wits 'gan fail and eke my strength, I turned from red to
pale.

Later he obtains speech with the lady under the gateway of a house; she declares her belief that all men are perfidious, to which the lover answers that they are not all made alike. Endrina's resistance soon becomes fainter, as shown in the following verse:

Thereon Endrina from the porch 'gan move her gentle feet,
And stood in all the pride of youth, full fresh and fair and
sweet,
Till by the well with downcast eyes at length she took her
seat,
And I, emboldened by her smile, did Love's fond tale repeat.²

Dame Endrina, alarmed by his ardour, then withholds her presence, and the old woman nick-named Trota-Conventos is sent to plead with her. The *amour* is told with striking grace and skill, the subtlety of the old woman, the feminine charms and vacillations of the young one, and the fiery impatience of the lover are drawn to the life. 'Truly', says, somewhat in this fashion, the old woman to Endrina, 'all went well with you when your husband of blessed memory yet lived, but a house without a man therein is worth little. You sit here, daughter, sad as the mateless turtle-dove; you are daily

¹ Ducamin, stanzas 653, 654.

² Ducamin, stanza 669.

growing thinner and more bitter of mood, for where women dwell alone there is ever bickering.'

To this Dame Endrina answers that she cannot yet marry, for it would ill become her to put aside her mourning for her first husband before the year is out; moreover a hasty second marriage would cause her to lose her legacy, and she proceeds to tell a fable to prove this point.

Things begin to look so black for the lover that Trota-Conventos tells him the lady can never be his.

The lover, who is at times the Archpriest himself, and at times a certain Don Melon Ortis, a gay young gallant, now breaks into bitter lamentations:

LAMENT OF A DESPISED LOVER.¹

Say, lovelorn heart, that art condemned upon despair to feed,
Why slay the form wherein thou dwellst and make it pine
and bleed?

Why serve a lady who of love taketh but little heed?
Alas, poor heart, thy fault, I trow, thou'lt rue in very deed!

Ye weeping eyes with beauty dimmed, unhappy was the day
When first toward a lady false ye let your glances stray.
Methinketh for such grievous fault ye will full dearly pay,
And tears will rob you of your light, and take your pride
away.

Alas, thou hapless, foolish tongue, oh say, why wast thou fain
To speak with her, that ever held thy words in proud dis-
dain?

From one thus reckless of thy woe what thoughtest thou to
gain?

And thou, poor tortured body, thou art wasted with thy pain.

O women, false and treacherous, that none may e'er believe,
Fickle are ye and pitiless, and all men ye deceive.
The true of heart that love you well, forsaken oft ye leave;
Would that Love's madness ye may know and pine away and
grieve.

Trota-Conventos, on another visit, brings him better news:
'Truly the lady loves you,' says she, and in one of the best

¹ Ducamin, p. 139, verses 786 and 788-90.

passages of the novelette she begins to mention to him the sure signs of this love :

ENDRINA AND TROTA-CONVENTOS.¹

Then spake the old dame cheerily : ‘ Right well I wot, perdie,
That she is all afire with love, that lady fair to see,
For when with eyes upon her face I ’gin to speak of thee
I see the warm flush on her cheek, and her eyes right full of
glee.

Weary of oft-told tales of thee, belike of speech I fail,
Then straight with soft, entreating words mine ears she will
assail,
And when I plead forgetfulness will start herself the tale,
While with love-tokens on her face no coy denials avail.

Round me she flingeth both her arms, when pangs of love
oppress,
And so in close embrace we bide with many a fond caress ;
Erewhile of thee she speaketh, and must needs her love con-
fess ;
If others come, we change our talk that naught thereof they
guess.

Full oft I see those ruddy lips a-trembling by my fay ;
While suddenly the roses from her soft cheeks fade away ;
Full oft, full oft her panting heart its burden doth betray ;
And the pressure of her hand reveals Don Love’s all-potent
sway.’

Don Melon, overjoyed, calls on the old woman to continue her good offices. ‘ That ’s all very well,’ she answers, ‘ but where is money for these my pains ? “ Who eats well should pay his scot.” ’ After being satisfied by the lover on this matter Trota-Conventos again visits the fair young widow. ‘ How goes it with him ? ’ asks Endrina. ‘ How goes it ? ’ says the wily old woman. ‘ Why, he is thinner than a fowl after Michaelmas, and you, lady, are heedless of his sufferings. Tell me, I pray you, your will, either the matter must be

¹ Ducamin, p. 142, verses 807-10.

done or left undone.' 'Truly, I love him well,' says Endrina, 'but shame and fear do sorely oppress me.' 'Pooh, where is the shame?' says the temptress, 'honourable marriage is his desire.' Pretty verses follow, telling of the lady's struggles against an overpowering passion. 'Come,' says the old woman, 'both of you are dying for love; why struggle longer? Obey Love's command, or if not, at least distract yourself. Come to see me, and we will make merry together.' Endrina is powerless in such hands, and her seduction follows. Trota-Convencos, however, saves the widow's good name by persuading Don Melon to marry her.

An amusing fable then follows as a warning to ladies against the craft of men, after which the poet proceeds without transition to the story of other love-adventures.

The next lady to whom the Archpriest pays court dies, and grief drives him for a time to his bed. Ere long he goes to the mountains, and proclaims himself the hero of the mountain-songs, of which I give two translated specimens. In *The Book of Good Love* there are eight of these so-called *Serranas*.¹ They are largely parodies, full of vigour and local colour, of a form of poetry of which there are many examples among the lyrics of Galicia. With Ruiz a lively realism takes the place of the studied grace of the Troubadours. His mountain-girls are strapping young rustics, more like Dulcinea of Tobosa than a shepherdess of Provence.

In the two specimens given the girl has a shrewd eye to a good bargain, and the poet is ready with his promises, and skilful in evading their fulfilment.

SERRANA.²

On the week's first day befell me in the middle of the glade,
Close beside Cornejo's hostel, that I met a mountain-maid;
Girt was she with woollen girdle and in *vermeil* fine arrayed,
'May God bless thee, O my Sister,' courteously to her I said.

¹ See p. 55 on the Serranillas of Santillana.

² Ducamin, 177.

Spake the maiden : ' Say, what wouldst thou, why so far afield
dost stray ? '

' E'en to seek a wife in marriage, o'er the hills I take my way.'

' Wise is he who here would seek one,' quoth the maiden. ' By
my fay,

Ask, and she'll not speak thee nay.

Yet, O brother, tell me truly, what of mountain life dost
know ? '

' Cows I well can tend,' I answered, ' On a bare-backed mare
can go,

And the hungry wolf that ravens, in the chase I'll lay him
low,

Swifter than the hound, I trow.

And the cattle well I govern, and the steer I'll tame and turn,
I can make good leathern bottles, and the frothy cream can
churn,

Sew the sandals, play the bag-pipe, herein all of me may learn,
Wildest colt can sit astern.

I can nimbly thrust and parry, and in every dance excel,
Seek thou high or seek thou lower, few methinks can do as well,
When to wrestling I betake me, with a courage none can quell,
Him I grapple with I fell.'

Then the maiden gave me answer : ' Here a wife thou well
mayst find thee,

If thou give me that I ask thee, I to wed thee straightway
bind me,

Thou wilt make a right good bargain.' ' Then I answered
her in kind :

' Tell me that thou hast in mind.'

Then she spake : ' A kirtle give me, all of *vermeil* well be-
seen,

Six good rings of burnished metal ; give me eke a tambourine,
And a sheepskin for St. Ero, New Year's gown of goodly

sheen,
Say me nothing false nor mean.

Likewise give a silver buckle, earrings gleaming merrily,
Hood of yellow, richly bordered, would I have of thee in fee,
Boots that at the knee are fastened, so that all the neighbours
see

Menga weddeth well in thee.'

Then I answered : ' These I give thee, yea and all things thou
 dost need,
 Of the fairest and the rarest ; bid thy kinsmen come and feed.
 Straightway will we hold the wedding, yet to serve thee, give
 good heed
I must now away with speed.' (8).

SERRANA.¹

In the mountains up yonder
 Half dead I did wander ;
 And in deep snow I found me,
 With ice all around me,
 And cold mist and dew.

When at end of my chase
 A young maid, fair of face,
 I met on my way ;
 Fresh was she, and gay,
 And lovely of hue.

Then to speak I made bold :
 ' Thy servant behold.'
 But she bade me have done,
 And down the pass run
 With the best speed I might.

Then I said to her sighing :
 ' With cold I am dying,
 O, fair one, befriend me,
 Nor forth from thee send me,
 Give me shelter this night.'

Then the lass to me spake
 And this answer did make :
 ' Of a truth thou must marry,
 If with me thou wouldst tarry
 And give me good dower.'

' Right gladly, my maid,
 But married,' I said,
 ' In Herreros I live ;
 Yet all I can give,
 Thou shalt have it this hour.

¹ Ducamin, p. 181, verse 1023.

Then she answered : ' Come rouse thee,
 In my hut I will house thee.'
 There soon a great blaze
 My spirit 'gan raise
 With its light and its heat.

.
 And the girl made good haste,
 And bade me to taste
 Of sour wine and black bread,
 And likewise I fed
 On the salt mountain meat.

Quoth the maiden : ' Now feed,
 And drink to thy need :
 Come warm thee and cheer thee,
 No harm shall come near thee
 While here thou dost stay ;

For who to my pleasure
 Brings gifts in good measure
 Shall sup at his will,
 And of milk take his fill,
 And but little shall pay.'

.

After making various demands the girl receives this answer from the poet :

Then to her I said : ' Marry,
 Fair mistress, I carry
 Small treasure, forsooth :
 Yet know of a truth
 I'll go seek thee thy fee.'

Then the wench made reply :
 ' Nay, think not that I
 Will house thee this day,
 If no gold thou wilt pay—
 This soon thou shalt see.

No good merchant there is
 Without money. I wis ;
 And small my delight
 In the penniless wight—
 Come, get thee away.

With no fine words soe'er
 Canst thou pay me good fare ;
 'Tis a saying oft told
 That the hand full of gold
 Alone can have sway.'

Three religious poems follow, and after these comes one of the most striking parts of the *Book of Good Love*, that telling of the strife between Don Carnival and Doña Lent (9). A summons is sent by the latter to the Archpriest, bidding him and all men be ready on Shrove Tuesday to do battle against Don Carnival, but the Archpriest is one of his good friends, and tells with evident enjoyment of the preparations for defence that the Don makes against the sour-faced lady. Hens, ducks, and capons come with spits for lances, trenchers and chopping-blocks for shields; after the shield-bearers appear geese and others as crossbow-men; loins of mutton, sucking-pigs, and kids follow in the rear, with fresh little cheeses that whet the appetite for the good red wine. The hare, the boar, and the stag also offer their services. But on the eve of the great battle a royal banquet is held by Don Carnival, and after great feasting and drinking all sink into heavy sleep (in spite of the warnings given them by the cocks), and are attacked by Doña Lent's body-guard of fish, and taken prisoners. Don Carnival, while under lock and key, is visited by friars who labour at his conversion.

His confessor counsels him, as follows: ¹

To visit church and cemetery be it thy sole delight,
 Daily the Holy Mass attend, the holy psalms recite,
 Be ever watchful and devout, and 'gainst temptation fight,
 And God will help thee, and thy fast and vigil will requite.

The poem thus proceeds: ¹

Devoutly then Don Carnival each ordinance obeyed,
 And many a penance he performed, and full confession made;
 Gained absolution of his sins with 'Mea culpa' said;
 Withal the good friar blessed him, and his hand upon him
 laid.

¹ Ducamin, p. 208, verses 1170-2.

Don Carnival imprisoned long in grievous plight must be,
 And after battle needs must dwell in tears and misery;
 Brought low by grief and sore travail, wounded and weak is he,
 No Christian man soever in his durance may he see.

Meanwhile Doña Lent traverses the whole realm, making all men to be at peace with one another, and causing each house and all it contains to be cleansed and purified. While she is thus engaged, it chances that Don Carnival, on pretence of attending church, escapes from prison; he rides through the country, beating up his friends, and sends a fierce letter to Lent, challenging her to mortal combat. This she declines, for Spring is close at hand, and no fish will leave the sea to come to her help, and is she not, as she says, a weak woman, ill-suited for strife? Moreover she has vowed a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and for this gives her enemy the slip. 'Good luck go with her,' says the Archpriest with a sigh of relief, 'and guide her over hill and dale.'

And now it is Easter Eve, and on all sides is heard the lively din of preparation for the reception of two great emperors—Don Carnival and Don Love. In order to welcome the first, come forth from all the hills and valleys herdsmen and shepherds, piping merrily, and leading with them their oxen, sheep, young lambs, and frisking calves. Following Don Carnival's banner are seen rich flocks and herds—

And there are seen great goats and cows, sheep bleating from the fold,¹

In greater number than of Moors Granada hath in hold;
 Strong oxen, tawny, black, and red from many a goodly wold,
 Such treasure e'en Darius could not buy with all his gold.

Easter Day dawns, and a remarkable passage follows. It begins with some delightful verses, celebrating the great Spring festival. It is wholly Pagan, but full of that perennial joy that wakens in the human heart when Nature clothes herself anew, and the great Sun rejoices to run his course and each bird calls to his mate. The Archpriest feels that within

¹ Ducamin, stanza 1215.

him which made Dan Chaucer fling away his book, the Troubadour Bernart of Ventadorn break into rapturous praise of the nightingale, or the young Goethe exclaim: 'Wie herrlich leuchtet mir die Natur!' The following lines are, in the original, very beautiful.

EASTER DAY¹

The joyous festival hath dawned, the holy Easter Day,
And the great Sun all glorious hath started on his way,
And men, and birds, and bright-hued flowers in beauteous
array
Come forth to welcome Love with songs and meet him on
his way.

There welcome him a crowd of birds, the jay, the nightingale,
Finches and parrots, great and small, do bid their lord 'All
Hail!'

And sweetest melodies are heard, and many an amorous tale,
And many a carol ye may hear, and many a madrigal.

There welcome him the trees and plants, adorned in brightest
green,
And flowers of divers hues and kinds in all their pomp are
seen;
And men and women welcome him with bright and gladsome
mien;
While joyous music ringeth forth from many a tambourine.

The description given, later on, of the Tent of Love is celebrated, and of this I translate a few verses.

THE TENT OF LOVE²

To tell you how that tent was wrought (10) I even will make
bold,
And ye must yet from food and drink a little while withhold:
It is a story passing long, yet needs it must be told,
And many, when the song doth please, will let the meat grow
cold.

¹ Ducamin, p. 220.² Ducamin, p. 229.

THE TWO RATS¹

A Guadalajara rat there was on a Monday at dawn of day,
To Monserrado market-place right merrily went his way.
Gave shelter there a friendly rat, full debonair and gay,
Who 'fore his guest in frugal wise a couple of beans 'gan lay.

At many a table of the poor I warrant you is seen,
E'en though the fare be scant enow, a gracious, smiling mien ;
And pleasure most doth there abide where the meat is coarse
and lean,
So the rat of Guadalajara was right well content, I ween.

And when the feast was wellnigh done, and the victuals at
an end,
He of the town did straight invite his Monserrado friend,
Bidding him on the Tuesday morn to Guadalajara wend,
And after market visit him, a merry hour to spend.

Now when he placed him at the board he loaded him with
cheese,
And withal gave him roasted pork, fresh meat, right full of
grease ;
Fat viands gave and bakèd bread, as much as he should please,
Whereon the rustic, well content, 'gan nibble at his ease.

And so they held high revelry, but amidst their goodly cheer,
The palace-door was opened wide, the noise thereof they hear,
And right upon the threshold, lo, they saw their dame appear,
Whereat the two turned tail and fled, o'erwhelmed by sudden
fear.

The host, I trow, to find his hole 'gan scamper at his best,
While to and fro distractedly fast fled his worthy guest ;
Nor might he find a hiding-place, wherein secure to rest,
So squatting in the dark he bode, against the wall close pressed.

Eftsoones the fearsome hour is past, and closèd is the door,
But the country-rat stood quaking, and an anxious face he
wore.

Then the other spake him courteously, and said : ' My good
Señor,
Fall to and eat, I pray thee now, make merry as before.

¹ Ducamin, p. 250.

‘This food is good and savoury, pleasant of taste, I weet.’
 ‘Nay, brother,’ quoth the country-rat, ‘there’s poison in thy
 meat;
 For him in fear of death, methinks, no honeycomb is sweet,
 To thee alone it seemeth good, alone then do thou eat.

.

‘Give me in peace and quietude a few hard beans to bite ;
 Set not before me dainty fare, devoid of all delight.
 The richest viands taste as gall to terror-stricken wight,
 And thy great feast is bitterness when mortal fears affright.

‘Therefore I fain would get me hence, since sick of heart I cower,
 Bethinking me of danger past in dark and deadly hour,
 Ah, woe were me, if I should fall within the cat’s fell power !
 How fain were she to lay me low, to rend me and devour !

‘Truly thou hast a goodly house, and hast in wealth no match,
 Yet despite thy lordly banquets, lo, they snare thee and they
 catch ;
 And safer far is poverty beneath my humble thatch,
 For man he hath a fearsome step, the cat an ugly scratch.’

The nun then points the moral, saying :

‘‘Twere better feed on salted fish within the convent wall,
 And with the holy dames abide, obeying God’s high call,
 Than feast on roasted partridges, and lose my soul withal,
 Dwelling with wantons, and for aye the mock and scorn of all.’

The wicked old woman, who figures so largely in the *Libro de buen Amor*, at last dies, and is lamented by the Archpriest in the verses on death, to which I have already alluded. A humorous description follows of a young man-servant, whom he employs in her stead, the rascally Don Furon, perfect but for fourteen deadly sins, and an excellent faster when there is nothing to eat !

Hymns of some beauty—to the Virgin, songs for begging scholars and blind men, and mocking verses on the clergy of Talavera bring the strange collection to an end.

NOTES ON JUAN RUIZ

(1) *Alcald.* The seat of the University founded by the great Cardinal, Ximénez Cisneros.

(2) *Invocation.* The original consists of ten verses.

(3) '*Good Love*' (Buen Amor). The expression is used somewhat in the same way as '*Gays saber*' among the troubadours.

(4) *The Romans.* This story is from a Latin original, and a Spanish writer states that he has heard it told in the Province of Leon. Rabelais speaks also of a disputation by signs between an English wisacre and Panurge, disciple of Pantagruel. Here, as throughout his book, the Archpriest is greatly the superior of Rabelais in refinement.

(5) *The sick lion.* Some of the Archpriest's best work is to be found in his twenty-nine fables, in which he is often the equal of Chaucer or La Fontaine. Menéndez y Pelayo was of the opinion that he took twenty-one of these from an *Ysopet* of North France, while a few he seems to have obtained from the East through the Arabs. The influence on him of North France, though considerable, shows itself chiefly in externals. His treatment of the fables is thoroughly Spanish, and his local colouring gives them an additional charm. He has made as close a study of animal life as of human nature, and his humour is delightful.

(6) *And when there is no water-wheel.* From the time of the Apostolic Fathers the Church had placed women under a ban, and held the question whether she had or had not a soul a debatable one. In the *Poema del Cid* she holds a subordinate position, and is often much maligned in the literature of mediæval Spain. These lines, therefore, strike an altogether new note—Ruiz's women are throughout real flesh and blood, no pale abstractions.

(7) *Young maidens.* A pedlress of the *Trotte-couvents* sort played an important part in Spanish real life and fiction, a part natural enough considering the semi-Oriental seclusion of the ladies. A sanctimonious old female hypocrite is the scandal-monger who brings about the tragic catastrophe of one of the strongest tales of the *Conde Lucanor*.

(8) *I must now away with speed.* The versification of the *Serranus* marks a new departure. The Archpriest abandons the Alexandrines of the old *Mester de clerecia*, and adopts the shorter and more animated metres of the poets of Galicia.

(9) *Don Carnival and Doña Lent.* The framework of this allegory is borrowed from a French *fabliau*, '*La Bataille de Karesme et de Charnage*.'

(10) *To tell you how that tent was wrought.* This famous description is founded on that of Alexander's tent in the *Libro de Alexandre*, a Spanish work of the thirteenth century.

(11) *With goodly wine would ye such service pay.* An allusion to the cup of wine with which the jongleur, after the recital of a troubadour's poem, was rewarded. In the closing lines of the *Poema del Cid* the same reward is claimed.

D O N J U A N M A N U E L

(1282-1348)

It was in the year A.D. 711 that, on the banks of the Barbate in the south-west of Spain, the Berbers or Moors under Arab leaders defeated and drove back the Goths, a victory perhaps the most momentous ever gained by the forces of Islam. Three years later the conquerors had established their rule over the greater part of Spain, a rule destined to exist for nearly eight centuries. During this long period, whether, as at first, the Moors had the upper hand, or, as from the recapture of Toledo, the Moors came more and more under Christian government, there was a close intercourse between the two races, an intercourse happy in many ways.

Dwelling together as they did in the narrow streets and alleys of the old cities, the spirit of bigotry tended to break down between them, and the Arabs, while the dominant race, led the way in a large-minded religious tolerance, such as existed in no other country. In the arts of civilization they long maintained their superiority over the Christians; they were their teachers, builders, and architects. With the Jews, a people favoured in Spain as nowhere else in Europe, they achieved an all-important work in transmitting to the West the science and philosophy of the East. Alfonso the Learned gathered round him a brilliant group of men, most of whom were Orientals.

Centuries of a life of such close contact left perforce indelible traces behind them. The Spaniards of the centre and south, of a race akin to the Berbers, bear a distinct resemblance to them in their gravity and dignity as in their attitude towards women. Though the literature of Spain, as a whole, is Christian in origin, the strong didactic element that is a feature

of it is traceable to Arab influence, and it was the Arabs of Spain to whom is owing the first appearance in Europe of the Indian Apologue.

Juan Manuel, the Spanish Boccaccio, who did for the prose of Spain what the Archpriest of Hita, his contemporary, accomplished for her poetry, shows the Oriental influence more than any other of her men of letters. He spent most of his life in South Spain fighting against the Moors, and indeed a certain time also, like the Cid, in fighting for them. He entered into the spirit of the Arabs, knew their language, as his style shows, and stands midway between the East and West.

Don Juan is a great and singularly interesting historical personage, some fifty years of whose tumultuous life were given up to warfare and matters of state. Nephew of Alfonso the Learned, he was of the Royal Family of Castile, a family already famed before him for its literary genius, and he was brought up in the household of his cousin, Sancho the Valiant, Alfonso's rebellious son. At twelve he was already fighting against the Moors; at twenty-eight, as *Adelantado Mayor*, or Supreme Commander, he held in Murcia the highest office under the Sovereign in the State. He had a deep personal devotion to King Sancho, of whose son, Ferdinand the Fourth, he was the faithful vassal. During the minority of Ferdinand's son, Alfonso XI, Don Juan was for some years joint-regent of the realm, and held his own victoriously against the Moors of Granada. After having taken the reins into his own hands, Alfonso, with a treachery characteristic of Pedro the Cruel, his son, caused Juan the One-eyed, a member of the Royal House, to whom he had granted a safe-conduct, to be murdered at a banquet. Moreover, he repudiated and imprisoned a daughter of Don Juan Manuel's to whom he had been solemnly betrothed. These outrages provoked the bitter enmity of Don Juan, who for eight years in consequence fought on the side of the Moors. The times in which he lived and the wrongs he had to bear must be taken into account in judging of his conduct in this matter, and a better king than Alfonso

would have bound him to himself. 'God require it of my soul and body', says Don Juan in one of his works, 'if for the benefits and nurture that Don Sancho gave me I did not serve as faithfully as I might both him and Don Fernando, his son, likewise that King, Don Alfonso, his grandson, so far as he gave me occasion for serving him, and so far as I had not to protect me against him and his misdeeds.'

In 1335 a peace was made between the king and his powerful kinsman, who thenceforth served him loyally. Under his sovereign he fought in the battle of Salado, the greatest victory over the Moors since the famous battle of the Navas de Tolosa; he was also probably present at the siege of Algeciras, in which Chaucer's valiant Knight is represented as bearing a part.

Turbulent, proud, and ambitious as Don Juan showed himself to be, he yet felt that war was a matter not lightly to be undertaken, and that considerations of honour alone justified it. 'A man must overlook much', he says, 'ere he entered into war; all things save only dishonour must he be willing to suffer; for not only war, wherein are so many ills, but even death, the last ill of all, must a man suffer rather than endure dishonour, for great men that are of much worth and excellence will face death but not dishonour.'

Like the two poets of succeeding generations—Santillana and Garcilasso de la Vega—Don Juan Manuel, with great literary gifts, gave his energies mainly to war. He found time, however, in intervals of repose, to leave behind him works twelve in number, though of these only four and two fragments remain to us. Everything that comes from his pen has worth and interest, but his *Conde Lucanor* is his masterpiece. This places him among the great mediæval prose-writers of Europe, and is comparable to the *Decameron* though without its grossness. The *Conde Lucanor* is the Spanish *Arabian Nights*. It is a collection of fifty stories from history and contemporary life, and of apologues, of which some few come probably direct from the East, while others are from Aesop and other sources common to European writers.

The imaginary Count Lucanor, represented as one of the independent rulers of mediaeval Spain, turns to his minister, Patronio, for advice on questions of morality or policy. Patronio, and none can doubt that in him speaks Don Juan himself, tells him in reply a story bearing on the case in point; he then deduces the moral from it, and closes with a rhyming couplet which further emphasizes it.

The book reveals in its writer a man of fine nature, in whom the spirit of worldliness is tempered and subdued by the influence of Christianity. It is from the hand of a great prince, and from one who had spent long years in strife, and yet there is no trace of either arrogance or bitterness in it. The date given at the end of the last story is 1335, when its writer had reached the age of fifty-three. All the stories show the wisdom and experience of one who has seen much of life, and made his reflections on it, and has learnt his lessons from his own close observations rather than from books. It has the ripe philosophy, the didactic purpose, the gravity and sententiousness of the Oriental, mingled with other characteristics that are essentially Spanish. *El Greco* has given us great portraits of the high-bred gentlemen of Spain, and the book has the refinement and elevation of tone, suggestive of these. Its complete freedom from affectation heightens the simple dignity of the style; it is that of a man too sure of himself to be anything but natural. In much its writer resembles the author of the *Poema del Cid*. Like him he clings to the probable and avoids exaggeration; like him he is a realist and deals but little with romance. Love plays hardly any part in his book. His women are strictly subordinate to the men, and their intrigues and cunning tricks, a favourite theme in the French *fabliaux*, do not apparently interest Don Juan. He has not the vivacity and gaiety of the Archpriest, but a quiet, subtle irony, the effect of which is increased by his invariable gravity.

His style has all the qualities of a real classic, a noble simplicity, clearness, and robust strength. 'I have composed this book of the most beauteous words that I could find,' says

Don Juan, and it is in his delicate sense of fitness in his choice of words, and in his power of adapting his style to his subject, that he shows himself a genuine artist. His uncle, Alfonso the Learned, founded Spanish prose, but it was Don Juan Manuel who developed it and largely helped to make of it a noble vehicle for the expression of thought.

As for the counsels given by the sage Patronio to his master, they are as valuable now as then: 'Life is a constant struggle, and so short that death should find you still working. 'Never throw away the precious gift of life for anything but honour; honour is a man's greatest possession.' 'All the good or evil which comes to you arises from your own actions.' 'Do not expect much gratitude from men, nor cease from doing good to those that offend you.' 'A slanderous tongue is the deadliest of evils, and next to that a spirit of avarice.' 'Naked we pass out of life; see that by good deeds you prepare for yourself a habitation in the world to come.' 'Know how to overlook small faults in wife or friend.' 'In meting out rewards, remember that good brains should fetch a good price.'

So much for some of the scattered wisdom of the book. As for the tales individually they are all excellent in their way, some already familiar, others wholly strange to us. Among the former there is 'The Emperor's New Clothes', perhaps the earliest European version of the story, told by Don Juan in his best and most humorous manner. In the story 'What happened to a Young Man on his Wedding Day' we have an ancient version of 'The Taming of the Shrew', though not that from which Shakespeare derived his plot. Don Juan's version is more full of acts of violence. A Moor marries a shrew and sits down to table with her. He orders his hound to bring him water, cutting him to pieces when he disobeys. His horse and his cat receive the same treatment; lastly, he gives the order to his wife, who meekly waits on him, and, after one dreadful night, is tamed. His father-in-law, seeing the success of this course of training, also kills his horse with a view to reducing his own wife to submission; she,

however, says: 'My friend, it is too late. Even if you kill a hundred horses; we know each other too well.'

The fables of 'The Old Man, his Son, and the Donkey', 'The Fox and the Crow', 'The Milkmaid and the Broken Pot,' with others, all treated by La Fontaine with exquisite grace and humour, are also excellently told in the *Conde Lucanor*. Among the stories of the unfamiliar kind none is finer than that on the national hero, Fernan Gonzalez, translated by Ticknor in his *History of Spanish Literature*. The stories have been translated in full under the title *Count Lucanor* or *The Fifty Pleasant Stories*, by James York, grandfather of the late Professor York Powell.

*How a Seneschal of Carcassonne lost his soul.*¹

Now upon a time Count Lucanor spake in this wise to Patronio, his counsellor, and said to him: 'Patronio, right well I know that death must needs come to every man, wherefore I am minded to leave behind me for the good of my soul some notable thing, the which may be an abiding monument whereby all men may hold me in honour. I pray you tell me how this may best be performed.' 'My Lord Count,' quoth Patronio, 'good is good in what manner soever it be done, and with whatever intent. Nathless, that ye may learn how and with what intent a man may best act to the profit of his soul, I would that ye hear of me that which happened to a seneschal of Carcassonne.

'My Lord Count,' said Patronio, 'a seneschal of Carcassonne fell grievously sick, and when he knew that he was nigh unto death he bade send for the Prior of the Preaching Friars and for the Guardian of the Friars Minor, and spake with them concerning that which he would do for the salvation of his soul, and enjoined upon them when he should be dead to carry out with due care all that he had charged them to do. And they did so, and he left a great legacy behind him for his soul's benefit. And when all that he had laid upon them had been speedily and punctually performed the friars were right well content, and had good hopes of his soul's salvation.

'Now it befell that some days after this a woman of a certain city became possessed of the devil, and by reason of the

¹ Gayangos edition, Number XL.

evil spirit within her spake many marvellous things. And when the friars heard tell of the woman it seemed well to them to go to her, even that they might inquire of her concerning the seneschal's soul. And they did so; and behold, as they entered into the house wherein abode the woman possessed of the devil, and ere they had yet asked her of the matter, she spake and said that she knew the purpose of their coming thither. But a short while ago, quoth she, had she parted with that soul, and had left it verily in hell.

'When the friars heard these words they told her that she lied, for they knew of a surety that the soul had made peace with God, and had received the Blessed Sacraments of holy Mother Church, and that, since the Christian faith was true, her words must needs be false.

'Then she answered, saying: "Doubtless the Christian faith is in all things true, and the faithful Christian who hath done well in this life saveth his soul when death overtaketh him. But the seneschal was neither good nor true, because, albeit he bequeathed much for his soul's benefit, it was with no righteous intent. For he was minded to give away his goods no earlier than after death, but, if so be he should recover of his sickness, to keep them for himself; and, moreover, he made the bequest well knowing that a dead man may carry naught away with him. Likewise he made it that his name might be held in honour and that he might have praise of the men of this world. Therefore, albeit his work was good, his manner of doing it was not so. For God rewardeth not only the good deeds but the good will, and even for that the seneschal had no good will he hath received no good reward," (1)

'And to you, Lord Count, in that ye seek counsel of me, I say that the good ye have a mind to do should be done within your life; and if ye hope for guerdon thereof, it behoveth you first to amend such wrongs as ye have committed, for it profiteth little to steal the sheep and give the feet to God, and it profiteth little to hold ill-gotten spoils and give alms of other's wealth. Lo, these five things must needs be with your alms, if they are to be acceptable unto God: first that they be of that which is lawfully held; secondly, that they be given in a spirit of true repentance; thirdly, that ye give largely enough to feel the lack of that ye give; fourthly, that ye give during life; and, lastly, that ye give wholly as unto God and not for the vainglory and pride of this world. Verily, if so be that ye fulfil these five conditions, your alms

will be acceptable unto God, and ye will have thereof a rich reward.'

Then the Count held that Patronio counselled him well, and he took his words to heart, and besought our Lord in His mercy to help him to profit thereby.

And Don Juan, thinking that the story was a good one, bade it be set down in this book for the profit of all, and made these lines which run :

Behold, if thou wouldst verily true glory find,
On doing well thou needs must set thy mind.

*Of that which happened to a young King and to a
Philosopher, his Tutor.*¹

The Count asks Patronio how best to train a young ward, the son of a dead friend. The following story is told in answer :

My Lord Count, a certain king had a son, and he gave him to be trained of a philosopher in whom he set great trust. And when the king died, behold his son was of tender age, and the philosopher trained him until he was more than fifteen years old. And as soon as he became a youth he set at naught the wise precepts of his tutor to follow the advice of young men, such as were neither bound to him by love nor sought to keep him from evil. And it came to pass that ere long the young king had so fallen away from good customs that all men wagged their tongues concerning him, saying that he was in a fair way to ruin himself in body, soul and estate. And the philosopher, seeing him in this evil pass, grieved sorely, but knew not how to act ; for full oft had he sought to restrain him by entreaties and soft words, as likewise by rebukes, and all in vain, for youth will have none of such things.

Now when the philosopher perceived that in no wise might he prevail on the young king to give ear to him, he bethought him of the device that ye shall hear of. Know, then, that he began to spread abroad the report in the king's palace that he was the greatest soothsayer in all the world. And so many men spake thereof that at the last it must needs reach the ears of the young king. And when he had heard tell of it he asked the philosopher if he were indeed as great a sooth-

¹ Gayangos, XXI.

sayer as men said. The philosopher, albeit at first he made as though he would deny it, yet after a space said it was true, but that it ill behoved that men should know of it. Now the young are ever eager to know, and to do all things whereunto they incline, and the king, who was young, set his lust full much on putting to the test the philosopher's power of divination. And the more the philosopher put him off the more eager he waxed. And at the last the philosopher agreed with the king to go with him in the morning to watch the birds, and to go right early that they might be seen of none.

Then they rose up very early in the morning, and the philosopher led the way unto a valley, wherein was a great number of deserted villages. And when they had passed by many of these they came upon a crow cawing on a tree. And the king showed her to the philosopher, the which bade him listen unto her. And behold a second crow fell to cawing upon another tree: and so they went on, first one and then the other, even until the philosopher, who had held him still to hearken unto them, began to weep very bitterly, and to rend his garments.

Now when the young king saw this he was a-fear'd, and asked of the philosopher wherefore he was afflicted. And the philosopher made answer that he was loath to tell him that which he had heard; nathless, for that he was sore pressed thereto of the king, he spake and said: 'Liefer were I dead than alive to tell thee, O King, that not men alone but likewise birds know that thy evil ways have brought the land to ruin, and caused thee to be lightly regarded of all men.' Then the young king said: 'How knowst thou of this?' and he answered him saying: 'Lo, these two birds have covenanted to marry the son of the one with the daughter of the other, and she that spake first said to the other that, since it was for long time that this marriage had been agreed upon, it were well that it should come to pass. And the other crow made answer that it was true that it had been agreed upon, but that she was now richer than that other, for (God be thanked!) since this king had been reigning all the villages of the valley had become deserted, and in the deserted houses was a great plenty of serpents and lizards and toads . . . therefore there was much more wherewith to eat than heretofore, and for that reason the marriage was not as between equals. Then the first crow, when she heard this, fell to laughing, and said that it were great folly for such a reason to delay the marriage, and that if only God prolonged the life of the present king,

she might full soon become richer than the other, for the valley wherein she dwelt would in a short space of time be likewise deserted, and therein were ten times as many villages as in her neighbour's. And thereupon both crows agreed to join together their children in marriage.'

Then the young king, when he heard this, was sorry at heart, and bethought him of his great fault in thus laying waste his kingdom. And the philosopher, seeing his affliction, and that he was now minded to attend better to the duties of his office, gave him good counsel, so that ere long both his private matters and those of state were set in order. (2)

*Of the Judgement delivered by a Cardinal in a Dispute between the Canons of Paris and the Friars Minor.*¹

Another time Count Lucanor spake in this wise with Patronio, his counsellor: 'Patronio, I have a friend, and we would fain carry out a certain matter that is to the profit and honour of us both. And behold, I might even accomplish it forthwith, but dare not until the coming of my friend. And because of the good understanding that God hath given you I pray you tell me that I should do in the matter.'

'Lord Count,' said Patronio, 'that ye may do therein that which seemeth to me of most profit, I would have you know that which happened to those of the Cathedral Church and to the Friars Minor of Paris.' The Count besought him to tell him how that was. 'Lord Count,' said Patronio, 'the canons of the church said that, as they were the rulers of that church, it was they that should ring the early morning bell. And the friars said that they must needs study and rise up betimes to sing matins, and that, moreover, none had priority over them save the Pope, and that, therefore, it ill beseemed them to wait for any man.'

'Then there arose great contention betwixt them, and either side spent much on advocates and lawsuits. And long time lasted the suit in the Papal Court, until at last there came a Pope who referred the matter to a Cardinal, charging him to decide in favour of one side or the other. Then the Cardinal bade them lay before him all the documents of that lawsuit, and the number thereof was so great that verily even to look on them might well affright a man. Now when the Cardinal had all the parchments before him he appointed

¹ Gayangos, XXXI.

a time for them that were at strife to appear before him to receive sentence. And lo, when they stood before him, he caused all the parchments to be burnt, and spake and said: "Friends, this suit hath lasted a right long time, and ye have lost much over it, and I will in no wise continue the process, but give for sentence that he that first waketh shall first ring."¹ . . .

The fine story of *Fernan Gonzalez* (3) has been twice translated already, and I will, therefore, merely give its substance in my own words. Count Lucanor, returning weary from battle, learns that the enemy has made a fresh attack, and that it behoves him to sally out forthwith against him. His followers urge him to take rest, but Patronio heartens him to renewed effort by the noble words of Fernan Gonzalez, who in a like situation, 'thinking more of his honour than of his body,' said: 'Friends, for those wounds we have let us not leave the battle, for the new wounds that we shall now receive will make us forget those already given us.'¹

One is reminded of our brave men (of whom 'The Student in Arms' tells us) who, having just come away from the Front, half dead with exhaustion, receive the command to return at once to the trenches.

Patronio tells a beautiful tale, probably of Oriental origin, on true friendship and its rarity. I here give the substance of it in my own words.²

A certain man bade his son cultivate friendships. He asked him after a time how he had fared in the matter, and the youth answered: 'I have made many friends, and amongst these there are ten who would, I trow, gladly die for me.' At this the father marvelled greatly, having, as he said, though full of years, but one friend and a half. Then he told his son of a means of putting to the test these so-called friends. Acting, therefore, upon his advice, the son killed a pig and put it into a sack, and went to each friend in turn, telling him that he had killed a man, and asking his protection. At this all shrank from him in great fear, and bade him depart, though

¹ Gayangos, XXXVII.

² Gayangos, XLVIII.

some, it is true, promised to pray for him, and others to attend his execution. Said the father on hearing this, 'Behold I have but a friend and a half, go put these now to the proof.' The young man betook himself first to the 'half-friend', who said to him, 'Though thou art in no wise my friend yet will I help thee for the love I bear thy father.' And he took the sack, thinking it contained a dead man, and buried it secretly among the cabbages in his garden. Then the son again made trial of his friendship. Meeting him in the street, he entered into a dispute with him, and gave him a great buffet on the face. The 'half-friend' looked him in the eyes and said: 'Son, thou hast done an ill thing, but for thy father's sake I will be silent as to the matter of the garden.'

The youth now went to the whole friend, who promised him his protection. Soon after this it happened that a man was really murdered in the city, and the suspicion fell on the son, who had been seen carrying his burden at night time. He was sentenced to death, and the friend, seeing that he could not otherwise save him, went to the judge and declared that his only son had done the deed. And his son consented to the sacrifice, and by his death saved the son of his father's friend.

The moral is given with some of the tragic intensity of *Everyman*. 'Death comes to us', says Patronio, 'and we turn to those of this world, and they say they have their own business to mind; we turn to the clergy, who can but promise prayer; to wife and child, who can but take us to the brink of the grave. Then we turn to the saints, as did the young man to his father's "half-friend", and they plead for us and strive to save our soul. Lastly, as the young man to the whole friend, we turn to God, and He gives us His only Son to die for us, and by His Death to vanquish Death.' (4)

The following extract is from an earlier work of Don Juan Manuel's 'A Treatise on Arms' (*El Tractado sobre las Armas*). It is an account of the death of Sancho the Valiant, the unfilial and rebellious son of Alfonso the Learned; it is of historic

importance, and has in it the ring of truth, as also of deep feeling.

Don Juan, a boy of thirteen at the time of Sancho's death, was summoned by him to receive his last injunctions. The account runs thus: ¹

'Don Juan,' (said the king) 'I have three things to say to you. First I would ask you to have pity on my soul, for so great are my sins that my soul is sorely ashamed before God. Secondly, I beseech you to mourn my death, and this ye may well do for many reasons; one is that ye lose in me your king and lord, a cousin-german who loyally nurtured and loved you, and there will remain to you henceforth no other cousin save that sinner, the Infante Don Juan, (5) the which is now a renegade in the land of the Moors. Another reason is that lo! ye see me die before your eyes and may not succour me, howbeit, well I wot that maugre your tender years ye are true, even as your father and mother were, and if ye saw one hundred spears coming to strike at me ye would stand betwixt me and them, and would liefer die than see me die before you. Yet now, behold you sane and sound, and I am being done to death before your very eyes. Yet may ye not succour me, for wit ye well the death whereof I am dying is not from natural sickness, but for my sins, and specially for the curse my father gave me, and that I right well have earned. Yet another reason why ye should mourn my death is that ye may live long, and see many a king in Castile, yet hardly one that loveth you as I.' ('And speaking thus', says Don Juan, 'a cough so great seized him that twice we took him for dead, and ye may well believe the grief that filled our hearts.')

'The third thing that I would ask of you is that ye give good service to the Queen Doña María (6), for I wot well she will have need thereof, and will have many a foe when I am dead. As for Don Fernando, my son, I speak not of him, for I trow there is no need. He is your lord, and ye are his vassal, and well I wot ye will be true to him.

'And now, Don Juan, seeing that I have thus held speech with you, and that ye are presently going to the kingdom of Murcia in God's service and mine, I would fain take leave of you and give you my blessing. But, woe is me! I may not give it to you, or aught other beside, for none can give that he hath not. I may not give you a blessing, for that

¹ Gayangos, *Escritores en prosa anteriores al siglo XV*, p. 262.

I received none of my father; but rather for my sins and ill deserts did he give me his curse, and that many times when sane and sound as likewise when he died. Eke has my mother, who yet liveth, given it me full oft; she giveth it me now, and methinketh she will give it me at her death.'

NOTES ON DON JUAN MANUEL

(1) *No good reward.* I have at times put in the dialogue form what is not so in the original.

(2) *Were set in order.* This is probably a story of Eastern origin.

(3) *Fernan Gonzalez.* A famous count of the tenth century, owing to whom Castile first rose to importance. He is a favourite hero of Castilian romance.

(4) *To vanquish Death.* There is a strong Eastern flavour in this story; it is first found in the *Disciplina Clericalis*, the first known collection of stories made in Spain, written by a certain Pedro Alfonso, a converted Jew of the eleventh century.

(5) *Don Juan.* King Sancho's brother.

(6) *Doña Maria.* Doña Maria de Molina.

FRANCISCO IMPERIAL

(*Early Fifteenth Century*)

Francisco Imperial was the son of a Genoese jeweller who settled in Seville. That he was in his day a poet of repute is shown by the fact that thirteen of his poems figure in the *Cancionero of Baena*, an important mediaeval anthology from the works of some sixty poets, which appeared about 1445.

Imperial is chiefly remarkable in being, as it seems, the first Spanish imitator of Dante. He was the author of a pleasing poem—the *Desir a las syete virtudes*, in most of which he closely follows the great Florentine. In the lyric, of which a version is given below, the scene lies on the banks of the Guadalquivir in Seville, and one is reminded of the famous meeting on the *Lungarno* between Dante and Beatrice. Those familiar with Seville will remember the bridge spanning

the great river, as it flows between the city and her ancient suburb, Triana.

DEZIR ¹

No fruitless journey mine, for like to manna
Sent for my comfort, past the Bridge one day
Of Guadalquivir met me on my way
Along the River, midway in Triana,
The beauteous lady, hight Estrell' Diana.
As when in May the morning shows her face,
So seeméd she as toward the holy place
In pilgrimage she journeyed to *Saint Anna*. (1)

A goodly guerdon mine in very deed,
In that there gave me this sweet jasmine-flower,
This rose scarce-opened, grown in fragrant bower,
This lily culled in green and pleasant mead,
Her gracious smile; and deigned to let me feed
Upon her lovely face my wondering eyes;
'Twas fair as his that once from Paradise
With *Ave* on his lips toward Earth did speed.

Hereafter let all poets silent be,
Homer and Horace, Virgil eke and Dante;
Let Ovid likewise cease his praise *D'amante*,
With all that erewhile paid to dames full fee;
For even such among the best is she,
As Lucifer, near whom all stars are dark,
Or flame that brightly burns to dying spark,
Or rose that queen amidst the flowers we see! ²

. . .

NOTE ON IMPERIAL

(1) *St. Anna*. A famous church close to the bridge, and built by Alfonso the Learned.

¹ For the original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 22.

² The original is of four stanzas.

THE MARQUIS OF SANTILLANA

(1398-1458)

Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, the son of a poet of considerable merit and the father of the great Cardinal Mendoza, was a brilliant political figure in the reign of John II, and also the chief lyric poet of his time.

Though lamentable in its confusion and anarchy, the age was nevertheless one in which there was the dawn of a new day, and worthily ushers in the great literary outburst of the sixteenth century. The influence of the Middle Age grew fainter as that of the classics and of the Italians made itself perceptible. The kingdom of Aragon, by its conquest of Naples and Sicily, and Catalonia, by its commercial intercourse with Genoa, came into direct contact with Italy, and through them the new ideas received from her gradually diffused themselves. Santillana, a man of wide culture and of keen interest in all things pertaining to literature, has been called the Don Juan Valera of the fifteenth century, and the comparison is an apt one in many respects. He was, indeed, a striking personality, a gallant knight, a poet, and man of letters. He played his part in life successfully and, on the whole, worthily. An old chronicler tells us that he was handsome of face and well-proportioned of body, singularly temperate in eating and drinking, valiant and prudent in warfare. 'Of such large heart was he that neither great things moved him, nor on small things did he set his lust. In his speech and bearing he showed himself generous and noble of mind. He conversed with much art, and was ever notable in all that he spake. He was courteous and given to do honour to his guests, the more especially to those of learning.' All this makes pleasant reading, but there is a certain adroitness and coldness of

temperament in Santillana that make him fall short of the pre-eminently attractive. He was for that too invariably successful, too quick in turning all events to his own advantage, and, above all, too vindictive in his treatment of the great Alvaro de Luna, whom in union with other nobles he hounded to his death.

On the loss of his father, a great magnate of Castile, Iñigo, then a child of six years, was left one of the wealthiest heirs in the kingdom. His mother, a wise and good woman, trained him with care, and defended him as best she might from a crowd of greedy kinsfolk bent on robbing him of his inheritance. On attaining his majority he showed himself well able to fight his own battles; and during a large portion of his life he was actively engaged in recovering, by means of the sword or the weapons of the law, all of which he had been deprived. He bore himself valiantly in a campaign against the King of Aragon, as also in a war against the Moors of Granada. After the Victory of Olmedo (1), in which he took part, he was rewarded with the title of Marquis, one which he was probably the first Spaniard to receive. Soon after the execution, in 1453, of Alvaro de Luna, the Marquis lost his wife, to whom he was deeply attached, and for the rest of his days gave himself up to retirement. He seems to have been exemplary in all the duties of private life, and above all a generous giver to the poor. He was lord of Hita (a place already known to the reader from its connexion with Juan Ruiz), and in the old town of Guadalajara, where he died, accumulated a great and famous library, a portion of which is still preserved to us in the *Biblioteca Nacional* of Madrid.

Santillana corresponded with great princes, and was a writer of good prose. He was a diligent student, and his knowledge of books was, for his day, extensive. He knew the classics by means of translations, but read in the original the works of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, was familiar with the poetry of North France, and had some knowledge of Arabic and probably of Provençal. From Italy he imported the sonnet into Spain, though his own efforts in this form of

poetry are insignificant. In his longer poems his genius shows itself to be mainly imitative. It is when he is himself, however, that he most excels, and he chiefly owes his fame to the short lyrics of his early manhood, above all to his delightful *Serranillas*, poems of a truly charming lightness, grace, and delicacy. *The Vaquera of Finojosa*, some verses of which I have attempted to translate, is among the classics of Spanish literature.

The *Serranas* of Juan Ruiz and the *Serranillas* of Santillana are Spanish forms of the Provençal *Pastoreta* or *Vaqueira*. This class of poetry probably originated in Provence, the first writer of them mentioned by name being Cercamon, who wrote from 1100–1110, and ‘made pastoretas after the ancient manner’, as the old chronicle tells us. The pastoreta is aristocratic, not popular, in origin. A knight passes through the country alone, generally in the early morning, and sees a young girl guarding her sheep or cows. He offers her his love, and a dialogue follows full of gallantry not unmixed with cynicism on the part of the lover, and of rustic wit and coquetry on that of the girl, who generally yields in the end to flattery or to offers of clothes and jewels. On certain occasions, however, she holds out successfully, and English children are familiar with the milkmaid who, when the fine gentleman says: ‘Then I’ll not marry you, my pretty maid,’ answers with *aplomb*: ‘Nobody axed you.’ The *Serranillas*, or Mountain-songs, of the Marquis are ideal examples of the *genre* with all the courtly refinement of South France and little of its artificiality. Both he and Juan Ruiz as men of learning were possibly acquainted with the ‘Pastoretas’ of the Troubadours; in any case they were familiar with Galician reproductions of them, as with the *Pastourelles* of North France. To the best of my knowledge the *Serranillas* have not hitherto been translated into English; I have, therefore, given several examples of them.

SERRANILLA I¹

Swiftly were passing the bright Summer days,
 And in the season when man gladly goes
 With cloak o'er his shoulders, warm doublet and hose,
 High above Boxmediana's green ways
 Met me a maid of the mountains, clad lightly,
 Footing it nimbly o'er pasture and lea;
 Never did morning of May shine so brightly,
 Fairer, methinks, than the Day-Star was she.

'Bless thee, sweet maid of the mountains,' I said,
 'Surely the fairest of maidens e'er born.'
 'Now by Saint Payo,' she answered in scorn,
 'Happy the hour that thou hither hast sped;
 Since on this pasture of mine I do find thee,'
 (So speaking she flashed 'fore my path in the field,)
 'E'en as my prisoner truly I'll bind thee;
 Hunter, I bid thee thy freedom to yield.'

'Quickly,' I answered: 'Oh, list to my plea,
 Lift not thine arm thy poor captive to slay,
 Maid of the mountains, have mercy I pray,
 Nor count me of those that thine enemies be.
 Though in this garb o'er the mountains I wander,
 Agreda's (2) borders I'm charged to defend;
 Think not they call me "Pelayo" (3) out yonder,
 E'en though unaccompanied hither I wend.'

Straightway on hearing my words there replied
 The maiden, relenting and smiling of face:
 'Now pardon me friend, and desist from the chase,
 Come rest thee awhile, come rest by my side.
 See then this wallet, that with me I carry,
 Wouldst thou as comrade a portion obtain?
 Since that Mingayo hath left me, come tarry,
 Be thou my shepherd, mine own trusty swain;

Dwell we 'twixt Fayó and Torell, and daily
 Merrily winter's chill frosts we'll outlive.'
 Thereon I answered the shepherdess gaily:
 'A willing consent to thine offer I give.'

¹ For original see *Cancionero castellano del siglo XV*, Tomo 1, ordenado por R. Foulché-Delbosc, p. 571.

SERRANILLA III ¹

Since first I drew breath (4)
 No maid have I seen
 Like to this one, I ween!

For lo, in the mead
 At Mata-the-Thorn
 On the pathway, this morn,
 That to Lósoyl (5) doth lead,
 So fair she uprose
 That I longed to call mine
 Early fruit so divine.

And golden meseemed
 Was the gown she was wearing
 And a clasp she was bearing
 That merrily gleamed.
 Then in wonder I spake:
 'Art lowly of birth,
 Thou fairest on earth?'

'Yea, my Lord, of a truth;
 And as thus ye eye me,
 Come, do not deny me;
 Speak your pleasure, forsooth.'
 Then straight I replied:
 'By Saint Anna I vow
 No peasant art thou!' (6).

SERRANILLA VI ²

(*The Vaquera of Finojosa*)

In a fair flowery mead,
 Bright and gracious of mien,
 Her herd did she lead
 Among shepherds the queen;
 And as she uprose
 With all loveliness laden,
 Who might deem such a maiden
 A maid Finojose?

¹ For original see same edition, p. 572.

² For original see p. 573. The first two verses are omitted in the same edition.

No flower, sweet and rare,
 That in Springtime is seen,
 In grace might compare
 With this milkmaid, I ween!
 Had I known of such rose
 All else I had slighted,
 And solely delighted
 In the maid Finojose.

Not thus was I feeding
 My love-laden eye
 That she, all unheeding,
 Should e'en pass me by;
 'Oh, speak, whither goes,'
 (This to prove her I said,)
 'Whither goes then the maid,
 The sweet maid Finojose?'
 'Gramercy,' spake she,
 With a face wreathed in smiles,
 'Full well doth she see
 Your arts and your wiles;
 All young lovers for foes
 She ever doth hold,
 So be not thus bold
 With the maid Finojose.'

SERRANILLA VIII ¹

Early once in Robledillo (7)
 Hunting venison I came,
 But ere long at Colladillo,
 There did front me nobler game;
 For at yonder mountain's base,
 That for name Berçosa hath
 Lo, a maiden, fair of face,
 Guarding cattle crossed my path.
 If my heart hath not belied me,
 Never sweeter maid was found,
 Yet, if one I know should chide me, (8)
 Let her swain her praises sound!

¹ For original see p. 574, same edition.

CANZONE¹

If thou hast love for me
 I cannot say ;
 I have great love for thee,
 This, by my fay !

No lady howso fair
 Can I more prize,
 No lady howso rare
 Love in such wise.
 Since I did thee behold,
 (O blessed day !)
 Thou hast my heart in hold,
 This, by my fay !

That I keep troth to thee
 Thou knowest long,
 Aught else to think of me
 Were grievous wrong,
 Captive, I cannot choose
 But thee obey :
 All my poor wits I lose,
 This, by my fay. !

I give thee all my heart
 For aye, I wis,
 Nor from thy service part,
 As reason is ;
 Thou that o'er me dost reign.
 And hold full sway,
 Deem not that I can feign,
 This, by my fay.

NOTES ON THE MARQUIS OF SANTILLANA

(1) *Victory of Olmedo*. One gained over his rebel nobles by John II, who reigned from 1407-1454.

(2) *Agreda*. This *Serranilla* was probably written about the year 1429, when King John was at war with the Infante Enrique of Aragon ; Santillana was part of the vanguard, detached to guard the frontier.

(3) *Pelayo*. A rustic name.

(4) *Since first I drew breath*. The versification of these poems, in the original, reveals Santillana as a master of *technique*. The light, tripping metre of the above suggests a dancing-song.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 34.

(5) *Lósoyl*, or Loçoyuela, a village still existing. The places mentioned are in the Sierra of Guadarrama.

(6) *No peasant art thou*. The Marquis is bent on ennobling the girl by his love. The last lines of these small poems generally contain their chief point.

(7) *Robledillo*. This poem, like the third one, takes us to the Guadarrama Mountains.

(8) *If one I know should chide me*. An allusion to his wife, for whom he would gladly give up the girl.

LA CELESTINA

(First edition, 1499) (1)

Almost at the end of the fifteenth century, in a period, that is, when Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella had reached the zenith of her power, there appeared the first edition known to us of the tragi-comedy, *Calisto and Melibea*, or, as it was later called, *La Celestina*, a masterpiece of such high excellence that some of the best critics place its author next to Cervantes himself. The book has the eternal freshness, the imperishable merits of the true classic. It has certain characteristics of our Elizabethan drama, and, this being so, it has, or should have, a special interest for English readers, while apart from this its amazing power and originality make their own appeal. The work obtained on its publication a speedy recognition; it has been translated into all the great European languages, and in Spain itself as many as thirty editions of it are said to have appeared during the sixteenth century alone. Between 1520 and 1530 an anonymous English version of *La Celestina* was placed upon the English stage. This version, important as being the first instance of the influence of Spanish literature in England, was tolerably well known; it may have inspired the young Shakespeare in his tragedy of early love, for there is a certain resemblance between *Romeo and Juliet* and *La Celestina*. In 1631 there appeared Mabbe's complete English translation of it, so

beautiful and full of charm that one wonders at its having been allowed to fall into neglect until the editions of it in our own day of Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly and Mr. Warner Allen.

The potent spell which *La Celestina* exercises over all who read it, is, if anything, increased by the mystery that hangs over its authorship. If the book, or the greater part of it, is indeed by Fernando de Rojas, it was by a man who, having produced a classic, was apparently content to do nothing more, and seemed bent on hiding himself from the public gaze. We know extremely little concerning him. He was a native, it seems, of Montalban in the province of Toledo, was a baptized Jew of the legal profession, and was still living in 1538 as Mayor of Talavera, where he died. The authorship of Rojas is founded on good, contemporary evidence, and, in spite of all the ingenuity of M. Foulché-Delbosc in attempting to disprove it, must still be assumed. Be he or not the author, 'What's in a name?' The personality of Shakespeare men may well cling to passionately, but of Rojas we know but two or three bare facts. The point, surely of far greater importance, is the consideration whether one or more than one hand wrote this remarkable book. This is a matter that has been long discussed by men of eminence. It suffices to say here that the late Menéndez y Pelayo, the greatest Spanish critic of the period, basing his opinion largely on internal evidence, has declared his conviction that Rojas was the author of the whole of it.

The work, though as much of the nature of a novel as of a drama, is divided into twenty-one so-called 'acts'. With regard to these Rojas makes, in an unsigned prefatory letter, the two statements that the first act is to be attributed to Juan de Mena or to Rodrigo Cota, and that he himself, as a mere vacation-exercise, completed fifteen of its acts in as many days. *La Celestina*, however, tells its own tale and belies these assertions. Its carefully developed action, its logical sequence, its unity of thought and language, speak for its being no patched-up work; and, moreover, the literary style

of the poets he mentions tends to contradict his statement concerning them. It may have been the fear that the book would be condemned on moral grounds which induced Rojas to pass off in this manner a portion of it on dead authors of high repute.

Again, just as the Book of Ecclesiastes, *King Lear*, or the best parts of *Faust* bear testimony that they are the products of their authors' ripest genius, so does *La Celestina* bring the same clear testimony of being no young man's task, dashed off in a few days' leisure. There are instances of other men, apart from Rojas, whose foible it has been to claim rapidity of execution: 'au reste, je n'ai demeuré qu'un quart d'heure à le faire,' says the poet whom *Le Misanthrope* satirizes.

With the exception of a few scattered verses *La Celestina* is written in admirable prose. Its argument is as follows: Calisto, a youth of good family and gentle breeding, enters in pursuit of his falcon the garden of Pleberio, a great nobleman and man of wealth. He sees there the young Melibea, Pleberio's only child. Falling at once in love, he begins to woo her, but is haughtily dismissed by her. Tortured by his passion, Calisto follows the advice of a servant and seeks the aid of Celestina, an old procuress, who speedily gains complete power over him, and also over two of his servants, to whom she promises a share of her profits. In an interview with Melibea, perhaps the most striking scene in the book, Celestina kindles the young girl's love for Calisto by appealing to her compassion, and her seduction soon follows. Later comes retribution. Celestina, refusing a fair share of the spoils to the servants, is murdered by them, and they in their turn suffer execution for the crime. Calisto, after one month's enjoyment of stolen interviews with Melibea in her father's garden, meets his death by an accident, after which Melibea in despair commits suicide in the presence of her father, whose lament over her death closes the book.

The originality of the author's genius reveals itself in style and treatment rather than in the choice of subject. His servants, like those of Molière, show the influence of Plautus

and Terence; but the writer to whom he is chiefly indebted is the Archpriest, Juan Ruiz. Calisto and Melibea bear a resemblance to Don Melon and Doña Endrina, and Trota-Conventos is the true predecessor of Celestina.

So much for the framework of the book, but of the genius that gives it light and warmth it is difficult to speak adequately in a few lines. The tragi-comedy is of real life, of actual men and women. In its composition there is an absolute unity of thought, the subordinate incidents and characters all serving to bring into strong relief the one great central idea, and this with the artistic power of a Velasquez in *Las Meninas*. The central theme is love, a love that is no mere amusement of the moment, as with Juan Ruiz, but all-absorbing, and brought for the first time in European literature, as Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly says, 'from the dusk of the romances into the light of common day.' In the treatment of his subject Rojas has something of Shakespearian power in his combination of a lofty idealism with a profound and unflinching realism. Though humour, it is true, is not his strong point, with him as with Shakespeare, the tragic and the comic stand side by side. He has a seer's breadth of vision and high philosophy. He has the brooding melancholy of the writer of Ecclesiastes, realizing life's tragedy, life's vanity and fleetingness, and the sad tenderness of a Prospero in his attitude towards youth and early love. The morality of the work is sound, and this because its writer reflects life faithfully; in the end judgement overtakes both avarice and guilty passion, and the elevation of the style carries the reader through much that is in itself repulsive. The book is, like all true classics, universal, and yet, in its austere simplicity and stately reticence, thoroughly Spanish and national.

As for its style one could hardly speak too highly. Strength, brevity, and nobility are its distinguishing qualities, and its excellence is the more remarkable in that Spanish prose had since the time of Don Juan Manuel made small progress.

The genius of Rojas is in some respects, as I have already intimated, Shakespearian in quality; it is so more especially

in characterization. His profound psychological knowledge reveals itself in all his personages, but nowhere more so than in Celestina herself, a truly marvellous creation. Though this 'great, wise bawd' is to some extent a development of Trota-Conventos, in all that makes her a unique figure in literature, she belongs as much to Rojas as Mephisto to Goethe. To understand what Celestina is, the book must be read in its entirety; she is its presiding genius, the spirit of evil, ruling the destinies of those whom she makes her puppets, and whose ruin she compasses. In the part she plays towards Melibea she is somewhat like Juliet's nurse, or the Martha of *Faust*, but these are mere vulgar, babbling women by her side, and have nothing of her greatness in evil. In demoniac power and subtlety she is, indeed, more like Mephistopheles than either of these, while in the conjuration scene she resembles the witches of Macbeth. Her knowledge of life and the human heart is so profound that it gives a strange fascination to all her utterances. She is the very spirit of egoism, and of amazing energy and boldness. Grasping, cunning, resourceful, wheedling, faithless, and remorseless, she easily gains a hold over Calisto and his servants, and with a skill yet more supreme plays upon the half-awakened passion of the young Melibea. At last she overreaches herself, and dies, calling for 'Confession' with her last breath.

Calisto is the passionate lover *par excellence*, and his love has the fervour and extravagance of Provence rather than of Spain. Like Aucassin, he thinks heaven would be worthless without his lady, and declares that saints in their Beatific Vision have no greater bliss than he in gazing on her. 'Art thou not a Christian?' he is asked. 'I am a Melibean,' he answers; 'Melibea I worship, Melibea I acknowledge, Melibea I love.' There is a naïveté, wholly mediaeval, in his prayers to the Deity, whose aid he invokes in his intrigue.

Melibea is like Juliet, both in her situation and in the southern ardour of her nature, but is far below her in dignity and purity. In the first momentous interview with Celestina she makes a maidenly attempt to resist temptation, struggling

ineffectually like some young bird in the claws of a powerful hawk. She swoons at the final surrender of herself to Celestina, and is then hurried on her downward course by a spirit of reckless *abandon*, though she indeed feels a poignant anguish on overhearing her parents speak of her as one still innocent.

After her swan-song in the beautiful garden-scene and the death of her lover, there is a tragic power in the monologue in which from her high tower she makes her confession to her father, and takes leave of him before casting herself down from it.

In the powerful realism of its low-life scenes *La Celestina* exercised the greatest influence on the development of the *picaresque* novel. The two servants, Sempronio and Parmenio, and the low women with whom they consort, are drawn with extreme skill. All the minor characters, indeed, are vivid portraitures and no mere puppets. Among these are Centurio, the bully, like Falstaff in boastfulness, Lucretia, the frivolous and unprincipled serving-maid, and lastly the dignified figures of Pleberio and Alisa, Melibea's unhappy parents.

The following translated specimens will, I hope, give some idea of the book's power.

ON WOMEN¹

Sempronio, servant of Calisto, tries to cure his master of his passion for Melibea, and speaks thus in dispraise of women :

Read the historians, study the philosophers, consult the poets ; full are their books of base and evil ensamples of them, and of the evil end, to the which came such as held them in high esteem, even as thou dost. Hear the words of Solomon, the which saith that women and wine make men blaspheme. Take counsel with Seneca, and thou wilt see how lightly he regardeth them ; hearken unto Aristotle, look into Saint Bernard. Lo, Gentiles, Jews, Christians, and Moors are of

¹ For the original see *Calisto y Melibea*, edit. Foulché-Delbosc, *Bibliotheca hispanica*, 1902, p. 8.

one mind in this matter. Nathless, for that which I have said and hereafter may say, do not, forsooth, mistake thee in holding them all as one, for many there have been, and yet are, holy, and chaste, and high-minded, whose shining crown of virtue verily giveth the lie to men's blame.

Howbeit of others, who might number to thee their lies, their intrigues, their sudden changes, their wantonness, their foolish tears, their mutabilities, their boldness, for all that they have in mind they forthwith venture on without deliberation? Who can recount to thee their wives, their many words, their deceit, their forgetfulness, their hardness of heart, their fickleness, their unthankfulness, their inconstancy, their affirmations and denials, their twists and turns, their presumptuousness, vainglory, quick despair, folly, scorn, pride, baseness, greed, lewdness, cowardice, sorceries, frauds, slanders, shamelessness, and whoremongeries? Think how small is the brain beneath all their fine headgear, how small the wisdom beneath all those gorgets of theirs; beneath all their pomp, their ample and ostentatious raiment, what imperfection! Rightly do men call them the devil's own weapon, the head of all sin, the destruction of paradise. Hast thou not prayed on the feast-day of St. John, and heard it said: 'This is woman, ancient in malice, she that drove Adam out of paradise and its joys, she that brought humanity to Hell, she whom the prophet Elias contemned?'

CELESTINA'S CONJURATION OF PLUTO¹

Celestina, about to visit Melibea, has in a conversation with her helpmate, Sempronio, assumed an air of hopefulness as to the result of her negotiations, well knowing that, with timidity and indecision, she would lose her hold over him. In the following conjuration, however, she reveals her full appreciation of the dangerous nature of her enterprise:

I conjure thee, dark Pluto, (2) ruler of the infernal pit, emperor of the damned, proud leader of lost angels, lord of those sulphureous fires that nourish the seething volcanoes, administrator and president of Hell's tortures, tormentor of sin-laden souls, master of the three Furies, ruler of all things dark that dwell in Styx and Dis, with all their pitchy lakes and shadowy, chaotic regions, protector of flying harpies and

¹ For the original see the same edition, p. 45.

all the company of monstrous and fearsome hydras, I, Celestina, thy best-known client, conjure thee by the power and virtue of this crimson writing, and by the blood of that nocturnal bird wherewith it is charactered, by the potency of the signs and numbers set down within this parchment, by the snakes' fell poison, wherewith this oil was concocted, and with the which I anoint this yarn, come thou and tarry not. Obey my will, and enter into the yarn and dwell therein, until that Melibea purchase it, and be so greatly entangled by it, that the more she may look on it, so much the more her heart may incline to my petition, and be moved to pity Calisto for the love that so cruelly oppresseth him; so that, dismissing all modesty, she may open herself to me, and give me guerdon for my journey and embassy. If this thou grant me, ask what thou wilt and it shall be done; but, if thou straightway grant it not, hold me for thy chiefest foe. Verily I will then invade with light thy dark and gloomy dungeons, will denounce thine everlasting lies, and with bitter words will make assault upon thy dreaded and horrible name. Thus again, and yet again do I conjure thee; so, trusting in my potency, I go forth, with this my yarn, wherein I think to bear *thee* enwrapped.

CELESTINA'S SOLILOQUY¹

Celestina then betakes herself to the house of Pleberio, and on her way thus soliloquises:

And now that I am footing it alone, it were well to consider the fears of Sempronio concerning this my journey, for ill-considered matters, howbeit here and there they come to good end, the more commonly produce grievous disorders. For this reason much deliberation seldom lacketh a good result; for, howsoever I have dissembled myself with him, it may well be that, if they should perceive that Melibea is the goal of my journey, I might verily pay the penalty of life itself; or, if they were not minded to slay me, they would even work me some foul disgrace, tossing me in a blanket (3) or cruelly belabouring me, and in such wise hardly earned would be a hundred pieces of money! Ah, wretched me! Into what snare have I put myself, for truly, in order to prove me of good diligence and courage, I have set my life at a venture! O miserable wretch that I am, since neither to

¹ See p. 46, same edition.

depart from it is of profit, nor to continue therein without danger! What then, shall I go on or turn me back? O fearful and grievous perplexity! I know not in which choice lieth my safety. In hardihood manifest danger, in fearfulness shame and ruin! Whither may go the ox that will not plough? Either way discloseth deep and hurtful pitfalls. If I be overtaken in this theft, hardly may I escape death or public exposure with a coronet on my head; (4) but if I go not, what will Sempronio say? That these were my arts, my wisdom, my hardihood and fair promises, my cunning, craft, and diligence? And his master Calisto, what will he say, what do, what think, but that I am even compassing newly-conceived deceit, and that I have, as a false and lying woman, disclosed the plot to win the greater profit of the other side? Or even though he conceive not thought so base, yet will he cry out against me, as one distraught, and will cast in my teeth all manner of fierce insults, with a thousand contumelies, to the which my timidity will lend colour, speaking namely in this wise: 'Thou ancient whore, wherefore didst thou inflame my passions with thy promises? Thou false bawd, for the whole world thou hast feet, for me a tongue; for all men service, for me words; for all a remedy, for me disease; for all ardent endeavour, for me the lack thereof; for all men light, for me darkness. Thou old traitress, wherefore didst thou offer me thy service? For thy fair promises gave me hope, and hope deferred my death, lengthened my life, and gave me the semblance of merriment; but these not being fulfilled, neither shalt *thou* lack penalties nor I despair!'

Ah, miserable me! Ill on this side, and ill on that, sore trouble either way! But when between two extremes there is no middle course, to hold to the surer one is wisdom. Rather would I offend Pleberio than anger Calisto. I will go then, for greater is the shame to hang back as one afeared, than the penalty in fulfilling with a good courage the thing promised, and never doth fortune forsake the brave. Behold the gateway yonder! Ere now I have been in greater straits. Be of good cheer, Celestina! . . . All the auguries are favourable, or I know naught of the art. Of the four men that have passed me four are named John and two are cuckolds; the first word that I heard in the street was of a love-sickness, nor once have I stumbled as in other times . . . All men greet me, no dog hath barked at me, no blackbird have I seen, no thrush, no crow, nor other birds of night, and best of all I see at Melibea's gate Lucretia, cousin of Elisa; she will not be contrary to me.

THE TEMPTATION-SCENE¹

Fortune favours Celestina. Alisa, the mother, receives her graciously, and being called away, to the secret joy of the old woman, commends her to Melibea. The following is a slightly abridged version of what is perhaps the most powerful scene in the whole book :

Alisa. See to it, Melibea, that our neighbour receive good payment for the yarn, and thou, mother, I pray thee pardon me; another day we will talk with each other at more leisure.

Celestina. Lady, where there is no fault, there is small need of pardon. God's pardon be with *thee*, for thou leavst me in good company! God give her joy of her noble and blooming youth! 'Tis at this season that the joys and pleasures of life come most within her reach. By my troth, what is eld but a hostel of all infirmities, the dwelling-place of troubles, the friend of peevishness, a lasting torment, an incurable wound, a lamenter of the past, a kill-joy of the present, the carking-care of the future, the nigh-neighbour of death, an unthatched hut, wherein rain beateth on all sides, an osier staff that a little weight doth bend!

Melibea. Mother, why abuse so roundly that which all so greatly desire to see?

Celestina. They wish for plenteous ills, they wish for plenteous toils. They wish to reach that which giveth them continuance of life, and life is sweet, and living they must needs grow old. Hence it is that the child would fain be a youth, and the youth an old man, and the old man be yet older, albeit with many a pain. And all this for life, bare life, even as men say: 'Fain would the hen live, for all her pip.' Yet who might reckon to thee, lady, the pains of eld, its discommodities, its weariness, its cares, its infirmities, its cold, its heat, its discontent, its fretfulness, and melancholy? And what of the face furrowed with wrinkles, the faded locks, the hard hearing, and the dim sight, the deep-sunk mouth, the toothless gums, the failing strength, the faltering gait, the slowness in feeding, and alas! madam, if poverty be added to all that I have said, the other troubles will seem as naught. It is an ill thing when the will to eat is overmuch and the where-

¹ See p. 50, same edition.

withal lacketh, and of all the surfeits I have known hunger is the worst.

Melibeä. I perceive that as *thou* hast come off in it so thou speakest of the fair ; the rich would tell another tale.

Celestina. My lady daughter, to the rich likewise there passeth away the glory and the careless ease of youth. Only he is rich who standeth well with God. It is a safer thing to be contemned than feared. My friends love me for myself, but the rich man is loved for his goods, and never doth he hear the truth ; all speak him words of honey as best pleaseth his palate, and hard were it to find a rich man, but if he spake thee true, would tell thee he had liefer be in a middle estate, (5) or indeed in honest poverty. Riches make not a man rich but full of cares, (6) make not a lord but a steward ; greater are those possessed by riches than they that possess them. Every rich man hath a dozen sons and grandsons, whose chief prayer to God is that he be taken from their midst. They look for the hour when they may place *him* beneath the sod, and his wealth within their own hands ; and they bestow upon him at small charge his last dwelling-place.

Melibeä. Methinketh, mother, thou must sorely lament the years that are gone ; wouldst thou not fain return to the first one ?

Celestina. Unwise is the traveller, lady, that, weary of the day's toil, would retrace his steps only to find him once more in the same spot. Of a truth all those things, the which we would liefer shun than have, are better possessed than held in expectation, because the farther they are from their beginning the sooner do they come to an end. To the weary and worn there is nothing sweeter and more welcome than the inn wherein there is rest.

Melibeä. Nay, but at least to live the longer, it is good to desire that whereof I speak.

Celestina. As easily, lady, dies the young lamb as the sheep ; none is so old that he may not yet live a year, nor so young but he may die to-day. Therefore in this matter ye young ones have small advantage over us that are full of years.

Melibeä. Thou frightest me with these thy words. By thy discourse I perceive that I have spoken with thee ere now. Tell me, mother, art thou the Celestina that dwelt of old by the Tanneries near the river ?

Celestina. Even so, till it please God to take me from hence.

Melibeia. Of a truth the days do not go by for naught. Methought thou wast comely. Thou seemest otherwise; truly thou art much changed.

Celestina. Lady, keep time from moving on, and I will keep my form from change! Hast thou not read those words: 'The day shall come when thou shalt not know thee in the glass'? But of a truth I have grown grey before my time, and seem double my years, for, as my sinful soul liveth, and this pretty body of thine, I am the youngest of the four daughters my mother bare.

Melibeia. Friend Celestina, it hath pleased me much to see thee and talk with thee. Take thy money, and God go with thee, for meseemeth thou hast not yet broken fast.

Celestina. O angel, O precious pearl, how sweetly dost thou speak! It joyeth me to hear thee. But knowest thou not what the Divine Lips spake in reply to the Archtempter, that 'Man doth not live by bread alone'? (7). Verily it is not mere food that nourisheth us, least of all me, that am wont to fast two days on end, performing men's errands, living for all good folk, and, if need be, dying for them. Ever have I sought rather to spend myself on others' service than to live for mine own pleasure. And now, with thy good leave, I will reveal to thee the end and object of my coming hither, which is other than thou knowest of, and of such import that we should all be the losers, were I to go from hence without acquainting thee therewith.

Melibeia. Tell me, mother, all thy needs, for if I could serve thee, I would do it of a right good-will, and that because we were in years past near neighbours. the which estate enjoineth willing service upon all good folk.

Celestina. My needs, madam? Say rather *others'* needs, for mine, when I go forth, I leave within closed doors, without the very ground I walk on knowing aught of them, taking my meat and drink when they come within my reach. . . . Alack, alack! Where there's no man in the house there is naught. 'Ill doth the spindle move, if the beard be not above.' But all this hath come about for that thou saidst of others' needs not mine.

Melibeia. Ask that thou seekest, be it for whomsoever thou wilt.

Celestina. Damsel, most gracious and most nobly born, thy gentle speech and the bounty that thou offerest to me, a poor old woman, embolden me to speak to thee. I have left even now a man sick unto death, who with but one word dropt

from thy noble lips and borne from hence within my bosom, will be verily healed of his infirmity, so great is the good-will that he beareth thee.

Melibea. Good woman, make plain to me that thou wouldst have me do, for I understand thee not; on the one side thou dost disturb and anger me, and on the other thou movest me to pity, and hard it were to give thee a seemly answer by the little thou hast said. Happy indeed were I, could my words heal any man. To do good is to be like unto God, and whoso doeth good receiveth it himself; and he that can heal a sick man, by not doing it compasseth his death. Therefore let not shame nor timidity withhold thee from thy petition.

Celestina. In beholding thy beauty, lady, I have lost all fear, for it were hard to believe that God would fashion features more beauteous, manners more courteous than those of others, if it were not to make them the store-house of His mercy and pity, the ministers of His gifts. Certes, we mortals are born but to die, and he that liveth for himself alone may not call himself born; such a one indeed were like to brute beasts, and even amongst them are some that are pitiful. What of the unicorn that humbleth himself before a virgin, the dog that will not bite his fellow if he throw himself down at his feet? What also of the birds? The cock eateth naught that the hens do not share with him; the pelican feedeth her young upon her own bosom. Since then Nature thus prompteth the beasts and the birds, why should we that are men be cruel? Wherefore should we not share the graces and gifts of our persons with our neighbours, the more so when they be afflicted with strange and unknown maladies, the cause whereof proceedeth from that place where the medicine also lieth?

Melibea. For pity's sake tell me without more ado (8) who is the sick man of such infirmity that his sickness and his cure proceed from the selfsame source.

Celestina. Lady, thou wilt have heard of a surety of a young gentleman of this city of noble blood, whom men call Calisto.

Melibea. So, so, old woman, no more, I prithee! Is he then the sick man, for the which thou hast made so many prefaces in thy prayer to me? Is it for him thou hast gone a-seeking thine own death, for him that thou hast taken on thee this dangerous errand, thou bearded and shameless old woman? It is well said that the most mischievous member of the body is the tongue. Would that thou wert burnt, thou false bawd,

thou witch, thou enticer into all secret sins ! For God's sake, rid me of her, Lucretia, for she hath left me no drop of blood in my body. Truly, if I had not regard for my good name, and feared not to proclaim his presumption, I would see to it, thou wicked woman, that thy discourse and thy life came to an end at one and the same time.

Celestina (aside). In an evil hour came I hither, if my conjuration fail me. Ho there, brother, (9) hie thee to help me, ere I be undone !

Melibea. What ! Still muttering under thy breath to increase my wrath, and double thy chastisement ? What then, thou wouldst quit me of my honesty to give life to a madman, make me sorrowful to make him merry, and carry off, thou, the profit of my damnation, the guerdon of my error ? And I, forsooth, am to ruin the house and honour of my father to serve an accursed old wretch, such as thou art ? Thinkst thou that I do not perceive the drift of this thy journey ? I warrant thee that the advantage thou shalt gain from it shall be this only, that thou shalt cease to do offence to God, and shalt straightway bring thy days to an end. Tell me, traitress, how hast thou dared so much ?

Celestina. The fear of thee holdeth me tongue-tied, lady. For God's sake let me bring my words to an end, and thou shalt see how little I stand condemned by them, and that all is done rather in God's service than with dishonest intent, rather to bring health to the sick man than to defame the physician.

Melibea. Good Jesu, grant that I may hear no more of this leaper-over-walls, of this night-goblin, with his legs like a stork's and face like a manikin, or it will be the death of me. He it was that saw me a few days past, and fell to talking wildly with me, and paid me his court. Thou shalt tell him, old woman, that if he thought the field was his by reason of my consenting to his folly rather than of rebuking him for his offence, it was that I held it better to tolerate his madness than to make public his boldness. Counsel him that if he would heal him of his folly he must needs abandon his evil design ; if not, it may well be that no words of his will ever be so dearly bought. As for thee, go back from whence thou camest, for thou makest petition to one that will show no mercy ; and give thanks to God that thou comest scot-free out of this evil pass.

Celestina (aside). Troy of old held out more stoutly, and I have tamed even fiercer ones ere now. No storm lasteth long.

Melibeä. What sayst thou, enemy of my soul? Speak that I may hear thee. Canst thou say aught in thy defence to appease my anger, and excuse thy fault?

Celestina. So long as thy wrath lasteth, my exculpation would be but to my hurt. I marvel not that thou art full of anger, for young blood needeth but small heat to bubble over.

Melibeä. Small heat! Yea, small it is, since thou art yet living while I make complaint of hardihood so great. What words, prithee, wouldst thou fain seek for this man that would stand with mine honour? Answer, since, as thou sayst, thou art not yet at an end; and perchance that thou sayst will requite me for that which is past.

Celestina. A prayer, lady, of St. Apollonia's, that it is told me thou knowst for the toothache; likewise thy girdle, for the report goeth that it hath touched the relics in Rome and in Jerusalem. The gentleman, whereof I spake, is racked therewith. It was on that errand I came; but since thou hast given an angry answer to my words, let him suffer what pain he will in punishment for seeking so luckless a messenger; for, seeing that in thy great virtue there was lacking pity, as well would there be lack of water, if men sent me to the sea. Yet, as thou well knowst, the joys of vengeance last but a moment, but those of mercy for ever and ever.

Melibeä. If it be that thou seekest, wherefore didst thou not straightway say it?

Celestina. Lady, even because the purity of my intent made me believe that no harm could be suspected of me. If the necessary preamble were lacking, it was because methought that truth telleth her own tale. Pity for his pains, confidence in thy good kindness, stifled within my lips the expression of my purpose. Moreover, lady, thou knowst that confusion of mind hindereth the control of the tongue; therefore, for pity's sake, blame me not; and, if that other one have done amiss, let it not be to my hurt, since my only fault is that I am his messenger. Be not like the cobweb, which never shows its force but with the weak. Let not the righteous suffer for sinners. Imitate the law of God, that saith: 'The soul that sinneth it shall die,' and that of man, that chastiseth not the father for the son, nor the son for the father. Lady, the vain breath of the vulgar cannot mar the clear face of truth. This my errand is verily pure and without offence. Lo, in this whole city few men are ill-content with me. I fulfil the behests of all, even as though I had twenty feet and as many hands.

Melibeá. I marvel not, for men say, that one teacher of vice alone sufficeth to corrupt a whole people. Verily, so much have I heard say of thy cunning craft, that I know not whether to believe that thou seekest the prayer in good faith.

Celestina. Never may I pray it, nor when I pray be heard, if other purpose be found in me, even though they gave me a thousand torments.

Melibeá. My past anger hindereth me, or I would laugh at thy excuse; full well I know that neither oath nor torment would make thee speak the truth, for it dwelleth not in thee.

Celestina. Thou art my mistress, I must needs hold my peace; tis for me to serve, for thee to command.

Melibeá. So much dost thou protest thine innocence, that I must needs hold thy sentence in the balance, nor will I pronounce lightly on thy petition. Marvel not too greatly at the anger that held me erewhile, for two things in thy discourse incited me to it, whereof either were singly enow to bring me beside myself: to wit the mention of that gentleman, who made bold to speak with me; and the seeking speech with me on a matter that could not but bring loss to mine honour; but since all this hath been done with good intent, I pardon thee the past, for my heart taketh some comfort in the thought that it is a pious and holy work to heal the sick and suffering (10).

Celestina. And such suffering, lady. By God's name, if thou couldst know him as he is, thou wouldst pass other judgement on him than that spoken in thy wrath. By God and my soul there is no gall in him at all, but rather a thousand graces; in bounty an Alexander, in courage a Hector, in bearing a king; and then his wit and merriment: in him no sadness dwelleth! He is nobly descended, as thou knowst, a great tilter, and in his armour a very St. George. As for strength and hardihood—Hercules himself had not so much. I am persuaded that in beauty he surpasseth even that gentle Narcissus, who was enamoured of his own face. And now, lady, he lieth overthrown by one poor tooth that never ceaseth to pain him.

Melibeá. And since when doth the pain hold him?

Celestina. A week, lady, but he is so wasted that it well may seem a year; and his best remedy is to take a viol, and to play songs and doleful ditties, like those, methinks, of

Hadrian, that great emperor and musician, who composed a ditty on his soul's departure, the better to suffer undismayed the nigh approach of death. And, though I know little of music, I ween he maketh his viol to speak. Then, if perchance he sing, with greater delight do the birds flock round to listen to him than to that ancient whereof it was said that he moved trees and stones with his song. Truly, if this one had been then on earth they would not have praised Orpheus. Think, lady, how glad a poor old woman, such as I am, will be to give new life to one that hath so many gracious parts. Never doth woman look on him that she doth not praise God, who made him what he is; and, if belike he speak to her, she is no longer mistress of herself, and must perforce do his bidding.

Melibea. Oh, how I repent me of my lack of patience in that he being ignorant and thou innocent, ye have felt the harshness of my angry tongue. To amend thee thy long suffering I will fulfil thy petition, and give thee straightway my girdle; and inasmuch as there may be scant time wherein to write the prayer before my mother's return, come for it to-morrow if need be, in all secrecy.

Lucretia (aside). Now verily my mistress is undone. Asketh she Celestina to come to her by stealth? There is some mischief afoot; more will she give than she hath spoken of.

Melibea. What sayst thou, Lucretia?

Lucretia. Lady, that enough has been said, for it is late.

Melibea. And mother, do not, I pray thee, tell that gentleman of that which hath passed between us, that he hold me not cruel, hasty, or dishonest.

Lucretia (aside). Did I not say it! This matter will verily come to a grievous end.

Celestina. I marvel, Lady Melibea, that thou so lightly esteemest my secrecy. Have no fear, for I well know how to conceal, and I perceive that thy suspicions have given an evil interpretation to my speech. I go hence with thy girdle in all gladness, for it is as if even now I saw his heart leaping for joy, and thanking thee for the favour thou hast done him, and I warrant thee that I shall see him much comforted therewith.

Melibea. I would do yet more for thy sick man, if need were.

Celestina (aside). More will be required of thee, and more shalt thou do, whether it please thee or no. . . .

MELIBEA'S SOLILOQUY.¹

(The following scene takes place soon after the previous one, and reveals Melibea struggling in vain against her love.)

Ah wretched me! O most unhappy damsel! Had it not been better to have hearkened yesterday to Celestina when, sent by that gentleman, whose goodly presence hath taken me captive, she made petition for my love? Were it not better to content him and heal myself, than perforce discover to him my wound at a time when perchance he would give me small thanks, when, with scanty hope of a favourable answer from me, he had already turned his eyes toward another lady? How much more doth it advantage me to pledge myself when sought for, than to make offering of myself under Love's constraint! O Lucretia, thou faithful serving-maid, what wilt thou say of me? What wilt thou think of my discretion when thou shalt see me openly declare that which I have never willed to reveal even to thee? How great will be thy consternation at the loss of my modesty and virtue, the which, ever as a damsel jealously guarded, I have held inviolate. Or hast thou belike guessed at the cause of my sadness? Oh, that I might see thee coming now with that procuress of my health! O God, all-powerful, that hearest the cry of the afflicted, that givest to the love-stricken a remedy, to the wounded medicine, Thou that rulest over the Heavens, the Sea, the Earth, and Hell itself, and that hast made all things subject to man's authority, I humbly make my prayer, that Thou wouldst give to my wounded heart endurance and patience, wherewith I may dissemble my terrible passion. Let not, I pray Thee, that modesty be tarnished, by the which I veil my amorous desire, and declare my will to be otherwise than that which in truth holdeth me. And yet, how may this be, seeing that the poison that the goodly aspect of that gentleman hath made me to taste hurteth me thus cruelly? O womankind, timid and frail! Why may not our sex disclose the torments of love that afflict them even as men do? If that might be, neither would Calisto live lamenting nor I in pain.

¹ See p. 119, same edition.

CELESTINA AND MELIBEA.

(Celestina then enters, in obedience to Melibea's summons, and a portion of the scene that follows is here given.)

Celestina. What is thy ill, that thou thus showest the tokens of thy torment in these thy blushes?

Melibea. Good mother, serpents devour this heart within my body. . . . How callst thou the pain that thus hath possessed itself of the better part of me?

Celestina. Sweet Love.

Melibea. Tell me what that may be, for only to hear thee speak thereof bringeth me comfort.

Celestina. It is a hidden fire, a pleasant wound, a poison of good savour, a sweet bitterness, a delectable pain, a torment full of delights, a sweet-cruel hurt, a gentle death.

Melibea. Ah, woe is me! If that thou sayst be true, hardly may my cure be wrought, since even as these words of thine are at strife one with another, that which would bring profit to the one side would to the other bring the greater pain.

Celestina. Lady, do not, young and noble as thou art, despair of cure. When God almighty inflicteth hurt straightway he sendeth a remedy. There is in the world a flower, as well I know, that can free thee from all ills.

Melibea. How is it named?

Celestina. I dare not tell it thee.

Melibea. Speak, and fear not.

Celestina. Calisto—— Alas, for God's sake, Lady Melibea, what faintheartedness, what swoon is this? Ah, wretched me! Uplift thine head. O, unhappy old woman that I am! Is this then the end of all my journeys? If she die they will slay me, or if so be she should live they will scent me out, for she will be unable to conceal from them her malady and my healing thereof. My lady Melibea, my angel, how dost thou? Where is thy gracious speech, where thy fresh colour? Open thy bright eyes. Lucretia, come quickly! Here is thy lady languishing in mine arms. Go, fetch with all speed a pitcher of water.

Melibea. Softly, softly, I will rouse me. Do not, I pray thee, disturb the household.

Celestina. O wretched me! Swoon not, lady. Speak to me as thou art wont.

Melibea. I will, and to better purpose than erewhile. But peace a moment, I pray thee. Do not weary me.

Celestina. What wouldst thou of me, thou precious pearl? What hath come over thee? Truly I think that all my toil is lost.

Melibeia. Lost is my virtue, lost my modesty, and spent my shame; and they, my dear friends and constant companions, could not thus lightly take leave of my face without carrying with them for a space my colour, strength, and speech, and the greater part of my understanding.

THE LAST MEETING OF CALISTO AND MELIBEIA.¹

(On the night of Calisto's death, Melibeia and Lucretia, while awaiting his coming in the garden, thus sing together.)

Stately trees, with shadows spacious,
Bow your tops in reverence meet,
When ye see those orbs so gracious
Of the youth ye fain would greet.

Stars, that shed from far your beams,
Lucifer, that shinest bright,
Bid him rouse him from his dreams,
Sure he sleeps, our heart's delight.

Melibeia (alone).

Gay-winged parrot, nightingale, (II)
Ye, who sing the dawn to waken,
Bring to him my dolorous tale,
Tell him, here I wait forsaken.
Midnight's hour is past, yet where,
Where, alas, is he?
Tell me if some lady fair
Keepeth him from me.

Calisto. The sweetness of thy lovely song holdeth me in thrall. I may no longer abide this thy expectation. O, my lady, my sole source of bliss! What woman hath there ever been equal to thee in worth? O, interrupted melody! O, most blessed hour! O, my dear heart! Couldst thou not longer suffer such joy without breaking in upon it, that the desire of both of us be fulfilled?

¹ For original see *La Celestina*, edit. Menéndez y Pelayo, Tomo II, p. 347.

Melibeá. O delectable treason! O sweet surprise! Is it the lord of my soul? Is it he? I may not believe it. Where hast thou been, most radiant sun? Where didst thou keep thy brightness hid from me? Is it long that thou hast been listening to me? Why didst thou let me send forth wild words into the air with this hoarse swan's voice of mine? Behold how this garden rejoiceth in thy coming! See how brightly the moon casteth her beams upon us; see how the clouds flee from before thee. Harken to the trickling water of this fountain, how much the more melodious is now its murmur amidst the fresh herbage! Listen to the tall cypresses. What peace is there between them by the intercession of a gentle wind, moving them to and fro! Behold their quiet shades! How dark are they, how meet a curtain for this our great delight!

. . .

The following two passages serve to illustrate the ripe philosophy and knowledge of human nature for which the author of *Celestina* is so noteworthy.

ON PREMATURE DEATH.¹

O death, death! How many of us dost thou bereave of sweet companionship! To how many bringeth thy grievous visitation sore discomfort! For one whom thou devourest when full of years, thou striketh down a thousand unripe ones!

ON MUTABILITY.²

There is nothing, howsoever hard to suffer in its beginning, that time doth not soften and render endurable. No wound hath smart so grievous that lapse of days may not mitigate it, no pleasure such plenteous delights that custom may not stale it. Evil and good, fair days and foul, glory and grief, all lose with time the potency of their first beginning. For behold, all that which we greatly marvel at, or full earnestly desire, no sooner is it accomplished than it is forgotten. Each day bringeth to us things that are new, and we incline our ears to them, and pass beyond them, and leave them behind us. Time verily diminisheth all that it bringeth within our reach. What

¹ p. 89, same edition.

² p. 86, same edition.

is there so wondrous, as when it is said the earth hath quaked or the like, that thou dost not straightway forget? Even so, when men say: 'Verily the river is frozen, the blind man seeth, thy father lieth dead, a thunderbolt hath fallen, Granada is captured, the King entereth to-day, the Moor is vanquished, on the morrow there will be an eclipse, the bridge is carried away, such a one is bishop, Peter hath been robbed, Inez hath hanged herself'—behold, within scarce three days, or seen a second time, the like events make no man marvel. So is it with all that happeneth. Even thus all things pass from us, all things are forgotten, all things are left behind.

NOTES ON *LA CELESTINA*

(1) 1499. This edition was printed at Burgos, and is held to be a copy of a still earlier one.

(2) *I conjure thee, dark Pluto*. As elsewhere, I have by a few omissions slightly condensed this extract.

(3) *Tossing me in a blanket*. It will be remembered that this was a punishment suffered by poor Sancho Panza.

(4) *With a coronet on my head*. Coronets of cardboard were placed on the heads of evil women as a mark of infamy.

(5) *He had liefer be in a middle estate*. The same idea is expressed in Proverbs xxx, verses 8 and 9. 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny thee, . . . or lest I be poor and steal.'

(6) *Riches make not a man rich, but full of cares*. See for this La Fontaine's *Le savetier et le financier*, where the former says: 'Rendez-moi mes chansons et mon somme, et reprenez vos cent écus.'

(7) *Man doth not live by bread alone*. Celestina is given to blasphemous quotations of this kind. The religious hypocrite figures in Juan Ruiz and in Don Juan Manuel.

(8) *For pity's sake tell me without more ado*. It must be understood that Celestina's garrulity is deliberate; it gains time, and, moreover, the whole drift of her rambling discourse is full of subtle suggestion.

(9) *Ho there, brother!* She summons Pluto to her rescue.

(10) *To heal the sick and suffering*. Some of Melibea's anger seems to be mere bluster. By violence, as Celestina perceives, she attempts to subdue her growing love for Calisto. Her reason tells her that the old woman is false, but her heart belies her reason.

(11) *Gay-winged parrot, nightingale*. One sees here the influence of the Troubadours, in whose poems birds often figure as messengers.

THE BALLAD OF COUNT ARNALDOS

(16th century?)

In a book which, in its poetical part, aims at giving renderings of lyric poems only, the Spanish romances, which are largely epical in nature, have a doubtful place. The lovely *Conde Arnaldos*, however, is a gem which one would be loath to omit from one's collection, and is, moreover, distinctly lyrical in character.

The romances or ballads of Spain are amongst the brightest ornaments of its literature, and no finer are to be found in any other country of Europe. Azorín writes on them somewhat after this fashion, and his vivid words serve well to convey a rapid impression of them :

‘Romances, old romances, who has composed you? From what brain have you sprung, and what hearts have you comforted? Romances awaken within us the memory of old Castilian cities, of narrow byways, of spacious mansions with their tapestries, of gardens with their cypresses. The simple and ingenuous romances of the people have been said or sung, in the workshop of a goldsmith, in the grange, or by the hearth at night-time. Many are works of art and polished with care, written by some poet wishing to give proof of his rhetoric, his grace and elegance. Others, short and rugged, have the form and the emotion of the work that comes from the heart. Do these popular romances indeed emanate from the people or from a genuine artist, from a man, that is, who has arrived at knowing that the perfection of art is to be sober, simple, and clear?’

In your verses, O romances, the Spain of bygone ages lives once again. Amongst you all we like the shortest best. These are a rapid vision, a theme but just begun. The incomplete has a profound charm. These short poems reflect but one minute of a life, a fugitive moment, in which a soul begins, but does not finish revealing itself to us, like the man with whom

we chat for a brief space in station or ante-room, and see no more, or the woman, our chance fellow traveller, who, without visible beauty at first, gradually as the journey proceeds makes her soft loveliness felt, and who, disappearing in the whirl of life, leaves on our soul the impression of some luminous stream.'

In the writings of Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly and Professor Ticknor, English readers may find the origin and development of the ballads of Spain fully discussed. The earliest of them belong to the fifteenth century, and consist in their characteristic form of lines of sixteen syllables with one assonance running throughout their course. These are practically all anonymous. The artistic ballads are a later development, and of the professional poets who composed them the greatest are Lope de Vega and Gongora. Cervantes loved the old ballads, and often quoted them; they are in vogue now as in his day, and are, it is said, still recited or sung in the narrow streets of Seville and other ancient cities. Señor Menéndez Pidal, with a band of enthusiastic folk-lorists working under him, has in recent years in his native province of Asturias obtained from the lips of the peasants large additions to the national collections.¹ Many of their themes are to be found among the Jews of Salonica, who in their family life speak the ancient Spanish of their forefathers, whom religious fanaticism drove out of the Peninsula.

The *Conde Arnaldos* is believed to belong to the sixteenth century. It has the form of the primitive ballad and the high qualities of the best of this *genre*—strength, simplicity, brevity, and suggestiveness. A few brilliant lines suffice to give us a picture of the hunter, the galley, its helmsman, and the magic power of music. Each word tells. The atmosphere of the supernatural is conveyed by the mere mention of the Feast of St. John—the day above all others for miracles. Who is the mariner, from whence come and whither bound, and what the mysterious secret, which only those who brave the ocean's

¹ See *Poesía popular—Colección de los viejos romances que se cantan por los Asturianos en la danza*.

perils may know? It is of the essence of such a poem to rouse the imagination and leave its riddle unsolved. The romance has been already translated by Lockhart and James Young Gibson; nevertheless I am venturing on a third version, which adheres perhaps somewhat more closely to the original.

THE BALLAD OF COUNT ARNALDOS¹

Have ye ever heard such marvel as to Count Arnaldos fell
By the sea-shore on St. John's Day, even as I here will tell?
Lo! with falcon at his gauntlet forth unto the hunt he hied,
And a gallant ship saw speeding—landwards o'er the water wide.

Sails it bore of finest satin, silken cordage, goodly gear,
And the mariner who steered it sang a song as he drew near;
Sings a song that calms the billows, soothes the wind to peace
profound,

Lures the fish from deepest ocean, makes them sport and swim
around;

Calls the circling birds to gather on the masthead painted gay.
Thereon spake the Count Arnaldos, ye shall hear what he will
say: (1)

'Gentle mariner, I prithee, rede me now thy song, perdie.'
And the mariner gave answer, even in this wise spake he:
'Unto none I'll rede my ditty save to him that sails with me.'

NOTE ON COUNT ARNALDOS

(1) The change of tenses is a reproduction of the old ballad, and, though illogical, gives animation.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 72.

GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA

(1503-1536)

Garcilasso de la Vega is hardly more than a name in England, and yet this 'Prince of Castilian poets', as his contemporaries called him, was of the favoured few on whom the gods shower gifts with lavish hands. Belonging to one of the most illustrious families of Spain, he was a poet, scholar, courtier, and valiant warrior, 'The glass of fashion and the mould of form.' Handsome, generous, gentle, and lovable, he was the Sir Philip Sidney of Spain, standing high in the favour of his sovereign, living a rich and brilliant life, and dying in the plenitude of his manhood. Like Sidney a writer of pastorals and sonnets, he was steeped in the very spirit of the Renaissance, and had a touch of Sidney's pedantry and all his delicate refinement.

In the army of his master, Charles the Fifth, Garcilasso took part in the long war against Francis the First; entrusted also with various political missions, he was frequently moving between Spain and Italy—the country of his adoption. In Naples, where he for some time resided, he was a leading figure in the great intellectual life of which it was then a centre. He fought at Rhodes for the Knights of St. John; journeyed to Austria, where, having offended the Emperor, he was for three months imprisoned in a fortress on the Danube; and shared in the expedition to Tunis, being, as it is said, rescued there from the hands of the enemy by Charles himself. He then passed into Sicily, where, with Etna towering before him, he wrote some of his most lovely lines, dark with the shadow of impending death. In the following year he fell crushed by a great stone, while besieging a castle near the old Roman city of Fréjus, dying at Nice some days later in the arms of the Marquis of Lombay, better known by the name of St. Francis Borgia.

Garcilasso was born at a time when Spanish literature, which had long been in a languishing condition, was, with the decline of mediaevalism, feeling more and more the influence of Italy. The young poet had, for his part, a small opinion of his country's literary achievements, and when the Catalan, Boscan—his well-loved friend—set himself to the task of introducing into Spain Italian forms of poetry, Garcilasso lent his genius, which far surpassed that of Boscan, to its accomplishment, thus inaugurating a new era.

Garcilasso's many activities left him little leisure for the Muses, and the quantity of his poetry is small, consisting of three eclogues with elegies, canzones, sonnets, and a poetic epistle to Boscan. His genius was mainly imitative; he owed something to Virgil and Petrarca, and yet more to Bembo and Sannazaro. But his mastery of the stately Spanish language is that of a great artist. His style is all his own, and it is for its perfection of form and the exquisite beauty of its verse that his volume takes its place among the classics of Spain. Though Garcilasso was the *preux chevalier* of his age, there is no ring of battle in his poems, which are those of a lover of nature in her softer moods, and are for the most part characterized by a gentle melancholy. In spite of the hold that Italy had laid upon him, one feels that he remained *au fond* a Spaniard. The eclogues, more especially, bear the national impress; their diction is that of the purest Castilian, and much of their scenery is that surrounding the poet's native Toledo. The first of these, a small portion of which I have translated, is perhaps the most beautiful of his works. The shepherds, Salicio and Nemoroso (both probably standing for Garcilasso himself), lament the one the hardness of heart and the other the early death of his mistress. Warmth and tenderness, as well as a stateliness of the Miltonic order, mark the noble verses of the original on the young Elise (1), and there is in them the ring of a passion unmistakably genuine.

Before the sixteenth century came to an end there were as many as forty-five editions of Garcilasso's works. Contemporary poets mourned his death in verses full of feeling, while

Cervantes and Lope de Vega place him above all other Spanish poets.

ECLOGUE I¹

Nemoroso, the shepherd, brings us in the first stanza to a valley, where are green meadows full of cool shade, running waters pure and crystalline ; ivy-clad trees gazing upon their own reflections within them, while birds from the foliage sing love-laments. He then continues after this fashion :

Ah me ! This very vale, where now I find
 But grief, and weariness and sore travail,
 Unto my soul content was wont to lend,
 Content how vain, presumptuous and frail !
 When sleeping whilom here, I call to mind
 That, waking I found Elise (1), my sweet friend—
 Alas, untimely end !
 O web, full finely spun,
 In evil hour undone,
 Cut sharp in twain by Fate's relentless shears !
 Truly more meet it were mine own sad years
 Of hungry Death should be the willing prey ;
 Harder than iron appears
 This heart that beats when *thou* hast gone thy way !

Say of your pity where those orbs may be
 That led my soul like some poor captive chained,
 Where'er they bent their gaze in glorious wise ;
 Where is the hand, holding rich conquest gained,
 The hand so delicately fair to see,
 With spoils of love I gave in sacrifice ?
 Those locks that well might prize
 But lightly all the gold
 That richest mines may hold,
 Where are they now ? Eke where the snowy breast,
 The slender column that its golden crest
 Upheld with gracious dignity and pride ?
 Lo, these bright treasures of such wondrous worth
 (Ah, woe is me !) abide
 Deep hidden in the cold and desert earth.

¹ See for original *Las cien mayores poesías*, p. 37.

Soul of my life, sweet Elise, who might say,
 When by soft breezes fanned, in this green dell
 We walked in blessedness and culled fair flowers,
 That we had need exchange a long farewell,
 And see the dawn of that accursed day
 That brought a bitter end to blissful hours ?
 Of grief the heavenly powers
 Gave me such plenteous store
 That now for evermore
 In saddest solitude they bid me groan ;
 And round my neck the burden have they thrown
 Of tedious length of days, whereof aweary,
 Forsaken and alone,
 I pine within this prison dark and dreary. (2)

Since thou art sped the flock no longer feeds
 In plenty as of yore ; nor from the earth
 The husbandman may hope to gather treasure ;
 Good becomes ill, and plenty turns to dearth ;
 The ears of corn are stifled by ill weeds,
 And coarse, wild oats, abundant out of measure.
 Nature, that for our pleasure
 Was wont of old to yield
 The flowerets of the field,
 Whose tender beauty banished all our care,
 Doth now, in stead thereof, but thistles bear,
 That with sharp thorns encumber all the ground ;
 And I, in deep despair,
 Water with tears the land where these abound.

The shadows lengthen when the Sun is low,
 Till all his beams are lost in twilight pale ;
 Then darkness o'er the silent country stealeth,
 Whence nameless fears make us to shrink and quail,
 And strangely menacing appear to grow
 The shapes that Night half showeth, half concealeth,
 E'en till the Sun revealeth
 Once more his beauteous light ;
 Such is the gloomy night
 Of thy hence-going, therein sad I stay,
 While darkness and its terrors me affray,
 Till Death, in pity of my hapless case,
 Shall bring the longed-for day,
 When I shall see the light of thy pure face.

. . .

The charming canzone *A la flor de Gnido* is addressed to the great Italian lady, Violante San Severino, on behalf of the poet's friend, Mario Galeota. A district of Naples was in Garcilasso's day called the *Seggio di Gnido*, where lords and ladies, and amongst these Violante, used to gather together. Gnido or Gnidios suggests Knidos, and the world-famous Aphrodite, well known through Latin literature to the sixteenth century.

The five-lined strophes, called *Liras* from the word *lira* (lyre) in the first line of this poem, were introduced by Garcilasso into Spanish, and used by him, and later by Luis of Leon, with beautiful effect.

TO THE FLOWER OF GNIDO ¹

If in my lowly lyre
Such music, sleeping, I should haply find
As might appease the ire
Of every angry wind,
And the fierce turmoil of the billows bind ;
If I, with gentle ditty,
Amid the rugged mountains, beasts of prey
Might even move to pity,
Make trees my voice obey
And bow their tops to listen to my lay ;
Do not, I pray thee, dream,
Sweet flower of Gnido, that my heart were fain
To make proud Mars my theme,
And celebrate his reign,
Darkened by many a foul and bloody stain ;
Nor captains far renowned
That in triumphal chariots go by,
By whom the Germans bound
Perforce in durance sigh,
And the proud Frenchmen subjugated lie.
Nay, solely would I praise
Thy matchless beauty, *thy* great worth advance,
And eke my voice would raise
To plead with thee perchance,
And bid thee soften thy too cruel glance.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 91.

I would moreover tell
 Of thy poor lover the unhappy tale,
 How he that serves thee well
 Like a sad harp must wail,
 Till for thy beauty life begins to fail.

Fain with my every breath
 For thy poor galley-slave (3) I'd intercede;
 'Tis but a living death
 That thou wouldst have him lead,
 Fast bound to Venus' shell for all his meed!

Through thee, as once of old,
 No more doth he his fiery steed bestride,
 Checking his courage bold
 And reining in his pride,
 Or pressing deep the spurs to either side;

Through thee, with knightly skill
 No longer with his blade gives rapid thrust,
 No longer 'tis his will
 To raise the arena's dust,
 Nor upon deeds of arms is set his lust;

Through thee, his gentle muse
 The sounding cithern now perforce forsaking,
 Sad dirges e'en doth use,
 Which, smothered grief awaking,
 Bring faithful lovers' hearts wellnigh to breaking;

Through thee, he gladly flies
 His chiefest friend as one importunate—
 Be witnesses these sighs!
 His grief I once could bate,
 And was his refuge from the blasts of Fate.

NOTES ON GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA

(1) *Elise*. Probably Isabel Freyre, a kinswoman of the poet's; her marriage took place in the same year as his own. His wife seems to have played but a small part in his life.

(2) *I pine within this prison*. The prison of the body. The same expression is used by Luis of Leon. (See the second line of the Poem to Felipe Ruiz.)

(3) *Thy poor galley-slave*. A play on Galeota, his friend's name.

SPANISH MYSTICISM

Before speaking of Friar Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz, a few remarks on the Spanish mystics of the sixteenth century seem necessary. From the early years of that century the Inquisition was fully established, an institution destined to be as a creeping paralysis to the national life of Spain, slowly transforming a people distinguished for their virile strength and love of liberty into a race of gloomy fanatics. This deadening influence did not, however, make itself immediately perceptible. The sixteenth century in Spain was one of fervent piety and brilliant, intellectual life; it was, in fact, with the first half of the seventeenth, the Golden Age of Spanish literature. The Reformation was, as is well known, met by a counter-reform within the Catholic Church. In this great religious revival, Spain in the sixteenth century led the way, and at no period of her history has there been a larger number of good as well as great men, full of high enthusiasm and aspirations. The very intolerance that was so dark a feature of the age was at least that of a people who, prizing the soul above the body, believed that in mortifying the one they were saving the other.

Mysticism was the natural outcome of a state of society in which, the discussion of dogma being prohibited, religion tended to become largely a matter of the emotions. It belongs to no special age or country; it showed itself in Socrates as in the Early Church; it is strong in St. Francis of Assisi in his revolt against the materialism of the early thirteenth century; it inspired Dante in the exquisite cantos of the *Paradiso*. The mystic seeks to unite himself closely to God, to detach himself from all things that retard and hinder his spiritual development, and to make of his soul the mirror in which the Deity is reflected. He believes that, illumined by the flame of love, he gains glimpses of that which is beyond the Veil, and arrives at a higher perception of God than is

possible to the mere logician. The devotion that the Troubadour gave to his lady, a love that in its ideal form had little of earth in it, is given by the mystic to God Himself. Under its influence the soul yearns after the infinite, the creature is lost in the contemplation of the Creator, aspires to the complete conquest of the spirit over the flesh, gains a pre-vision of the joys of the after-life, and catches faint echoes of the music of the spheres. Who, indeed, can positively deny the mystic's claim to this deeper spiritual insight? We are living in an age when science at least recognizes the mysterious influence of mind over matter, and vaguely guesses at spiritual powers, dormant and undeveloped in the average man.

As for the mystics of Spain, they were for the most part not only of fervent piety, but of high learning and philosophic thought. Their religion was no mere self-concentrated quietism, inasmuch as they laid great stress on the importance of good works, and on the impossibility without them of the soul's close union with God. There is more especially a strong practical side in the mysticism of St. Theresa, who shrank from dwelling on her own spiritual experiences, and showed a tendency to regard visions as a special temptation of the devil. She, in whose beautiful nature the ideal and the real were so harmoniously blended, was indeed the very life and soul of the high spirituality of sixteenth-century Spain; but other English writers have dealt with her so fully that it would be apart from my purpose to enlarge on her. It would be well, however, that we in England, who are apt to regard Spain as Motley, Froude, or Kingsley have taught us to see it, and who have heard much of Torquemada and of Alba, should make ourselves far more closely acquainted than we are at present with the lives and works of St. Theresa, Luis of Leon, and indeed of many others of their school.

The Spanish mystics are poetic in feeling even when they express themselves in prose, while the actual poetry that they produced is one of the great glories of Spanish literature, combining, as it does, the ardour of religious faith with the artistic sense of form and philosophic breadth of the Renaissance.

LUIS DE LEON

(1528-1591)

Friar Luis de Leon, Salamanca's favourite son, is by many considered the greatest of Spain's lyric poets, and is in the foremost rank of her writers in prose. A fervent mystic, he is associated with the religious reform initiated by St. Theresa; he is also a commanding figure in the intellectual life of his age, a philosopher, a theologian, and a great professor, learned in all the learning of his day.

He was born in Belmonte in the mountainous region of Cuenca, noted for the men of robust virility whom it has produced. His family was of some wealth and importance, and its members prided themselves on the purity of their descent, though the charge, a formidable one in a bigoted age, was brought against the poet of having Jewish blood in his veins. In 1544 he took the vows of an Augustinian monk in Salamanca, where in 1565, having obtained his degree some years previously, he was made Professor of Divinity. The University, founded in 1230, and enriched by San Fernando and Alfonso the Learned, was later placed by a papal edict on an equality with those of Bologna, Paris, and Oxford. In the sixteenth century its students were some 7,000 in number, and it had reached the height of its glory. The author of *Lazarillo* alludes to the wild lives of these students; nevertheless a large number of them enjoyed a high renown for learning and piety, amongst whom are to be counted Cisneros and San Juan de la Cruz. Salamanca, shorn now of much of its past splendour, is still, with its rich, golden-brown houses and ancient public buildings, full of beauty and interest. Its University is still mindful of its great professor; the hall where he is said to have lectured is to be seen, as also his tomb in the University Chapel.

It was in this city that the greater part of the Friar's active life was spent. He is said to have been a brilliant orator of the passionate Southern type. He was far from belonging to the school of thought hostile to progress, and clinging to the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. He used his knowledge of Oriental languages, and of Greek and Latin in an endeavour to throw fresh light on the Bible, and in certain of his utterances showed a freedom of judgement and criticism that was to cost him dear. The sweet serenity that characterizes his poems did not always distinguish him in his life ; and, if in grandeur of style and loftiness of soul he may be said to resemble Dante or Milton, he is like them also in occasional bitterness of mood and denunciatory vehemence. Such a man was bound to make enemies, chief of whom was the Greek professor, Castro by name, a pedant for whom Luis incautiously showed his contempt. It was mainly owing to this man's mischievous hostility that the Friar was brought before the Court of Inquisition, and charged, amongst other things, with having criticized the Vulgate and translated the Song of Solomon, this latter for the benefit of a professed nun ! Spanish procrastination and the malice of his enemies caused him to languish for nearly five years in a foul dungeon belonging to the ' Holy Office '. During these weary years books brought him consolation—the Bible, Homer, Virgil, and Horace—and divine visions gave him, as he tells us, peace and comfort, and showed him the uses of adversity. ' Thou, O Christ ' (he writes in his prison), ' Thou, who art my Judge, remember in Thy mercy that Thou art likewise my most sweet and gentle Brother, so that Thou mayst pity and pardon me ; before Whom, even as I acknowledge and confess the multitude and gravity of my offences, so, in exculpation thereof, I offer and present to Thee the infinite treasure of Thy Blood and of Thy divine and most rich merits, which by Thy gracious favour I would fain make mine.'

Condemned finally by the Commission, who sat in judgement on him, to be put to the torture, Friar Luis was, however, released by the Supreme Tribunal with an admonition which

was as near an acquittal as one could expect of a Court from which even St. Theresa did not escape without censure. On his return to Salamanca it is said that, when he delivered to a large audience his first lecture there, he began with his usual formula: 'As I was saying yesterday,' thus maintaining a dignified silence as to past sufferings; but there are those who say that the delightful story was originated fifty years later.

Friar Luis, poet and mystic as he was, showed judgement, zeal, and energy in the active conduct of life. He successfully negotiated various business matters connected with the University; and with marked ability and noble courage defended, after the death of St. Theresa, against the intrigues of their enemies, the Carmelite nuns of the convents that she had founded. The Friar never came into personal contact with the Saint, but had a perfect appreciation of her greatness as a woman and her genius as a writer. His *Life of St. Theresa*, which he did not live to finish, is among the best of her numerous biographies. As his years increased, so too did the honour and reverence in which he was held. The last tribute paid to him was his election as Provincial of the Augustinians of Castile; but his death, which occurred a few days later, prevented his ever taking office.

Of the high excellence of Luis of Leon's prose works lack of space forbids me to speak, but it is by his poetry that he is best known. The poems, it is true, are limited in quantity; they consist of fine translations from the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Italian, together with a small volume of original lyrics. In his exquisite originals, probably composed at a ripe age, the influence of his Hebrew and classical studies is very marked. The late Señor Menéndez y Pelayo, in a fine *critique* of the poet, speaks of his power of converting the Pentelicon marble into a Christian statue, and remarks that over that which he takes from Homer, Pindar, Virgil, or Petrarca is a breath of life which transfigures the whole. In purity of diction, noble simplicity, and majesty he is like Wordsworth at his best; but apart from these high qualities

that which is his own peculiar note is still more precious. He has a marvellous power of soothing the troubled spirit, and of lifting his readers into a region of majestic serenity that seems near heaven itself. His very melancholy, like that of *Il Penseroso*, brings comfort. In the *Noche serena*, for instance, there is all the calm beauty of midnight in the south, bright with the brightness of innumerable stars; in the *Morada del cielo* there is the dreamy peace of the southern noon, while in both there is a something still higher that no mist of earth darkens or jarring note disturbs.

In the *Canto de Caliope* of *La Galatea* (Lib. VI) Cervantes speaks of him as follows :

Quisiera rematar mi dulce canto
 En tal sazón, pastores, con loaros
 Un ingenio que al mundo pone espanto,
 Y que pudiera en éxtasis robaros.

En él cifro y recojo todo cuanto
 He mostrado hasta aquí, y he de mostraros ;
 Fray Luis de Leon es el que digo,
 A quien yo reverencio, adoro y sigo.

(I would fain bring my sweet song to an end with the praise to you, O shepherds of a genius that astounds the world, and which may well transport you into ecstasies. In him is to be found concentrated and united all that I have shown you until now, and yet have to show you ; it is of Friar Luis de Leon that I speak, one whom I reverence, worship, and follow.)

NOCHE SERENA¹

(*A Calm Night*)

Whene'er mine eyes I raise
 T'ward Heaven's unnumbered stars of purest light,
 Then sadly downward gaze
 On Earth, close wrapt in night,
 Buried in sleep, forgetful of her plight,

¹ The original is of sixteen verses, and is to be found in *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 114.

Lo ! mingled love and woe
Awaken in my breast such dolorous sighs,
That all unheeded flow
The fountains of mine eyes,
Till the tongue moves and lamentations rise :

‘Large mansion, heavenly gate,
Temple of beauty and of radiance pure,
Tell me, what hapless fate
My spirit doth immure
Within this prison, (1) gloomy and obscure.’

Alas ! What idle dream
Lureth our senses far from Truth’s bright way,
That of thy good supreme
Forgetful we would stray
To seek vain shadows and false calls obey ?

Fond fantasies beguile,
And make us heedless of our soul’s true weal,
Yet silently the while
Onward the Heavens wheel,
And life’s brief hours all unrelenting steal.

Awake, from folly flee,
And to your parlous state give timely heed,
Sure, it can never be
That, born for heavenly meed,
The immortal soul on empty dreams can feed.

For who can lift his eyes
On Heaven’s vault nor find Earth’s pleasures cloy,
So that with groans and sighs
He panteth to destroy
The chains that keep the soul exiled from joy ?

Above in regal seat
Dwell Peace and calm Content for evermore ;
And there, ’mid honours meet,
Is Love, while near him soar
Spirits of joy, that round his throne adore.

There in her fullness seen
Beauty past utterance shows her radiant face,
The while in glorious sheen
Pure Day the Night doth chase,
And Spring aye scatters flowers with smiling grace.

O fields in truth divine !
 O meadows, truly fair and wondrous sweet !
 O thou most precious mine
 Of beauty, fair retreat,
 Sequestered vale wherein all blessings meet !

MORADA DEL CIELO ¹

(*The Heavenly Home*)

Region of light eterne,
 Sweet field, whose plenteous store love's garner fills,
 The which no heat may burn,
 No frost untimely kills,
 Whose balmy fragrance heavenly peace distils !
 See, in those pleasant meads,
 His bright locks garlanded with flowers of spring,
 How the Good Shepherd leads,
 And, without crook or sling,
 To pastures green his well-loved flock doth bring.
 And as he gently leads
 Behold the happy sheep behind Him going !
 These with fair flowers he feeds,
 Roses for ever blowing,
 And, as men gather them, for ever growing.
 And now unto the mountain
 Of high perfection these, His sheep, He guides,
 Now bathes them in the fountain,
 Wherein pure joy abides ;
 Pastor and pasture, He alone their food provides.
 When, travelling toward the west,
 The Sun stands midway in the heavenly sphere,
 He takes His noontide rest,
 His loved ones gathering near,
 And with sweet song delights the holy ear.
 And happiness untold
 Possesses them that listen to His lyre, (2)
 And poor seems earthly gold
 As, filled with sacred fire,
 He lifts the enraptured spirit ever higher.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 119.

O music, that at least
But some few notes might reach me from above,
And that the Soul's pure feast
Might every stain remove,
And make her one with Thee, O God of love !

Then would she dwell in peace
With Thee, sweet Spouse, and e'en as one new-born,
Gain from the flesh release,
No more imprisoned mourn,
Nor wander far from Thee as one forlorn.

ODE TO FRANCISCO SALINAS ¹

(*A Blind Organist*)

The air grows pure and clear,
Steeped in unearthly loveliness and light,
When we, Salinas, hear
Thy music take its flight,
Pressed from the keys by hands of magic might ;

And, at that wondrous sound,
My soul, that long in apathy had lain,
New wisdom now hath found ;
And taught by thee would fain
Of her high origin take thought again.

.

So, journeying through the air,
Till in the highest sphere in joy immersed,
She hears that music rare
Stilling the Spirit's thirst,
That music, of all harmonies the first ;

And with enraptured gaze
She sees the Master, Who o'er all hath reign ;
He His great cithern plays,
Striking those chords amain,
Whereby He doth the universe sustain.

.

¹ The original poem is of ten verses, and is to be found in *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 108.

Here in this sea of sound
 Floats the tired soul in endless ecstasy,
 Till, therein wholly drowned
 She's lost to things that be.
 From all that fetters her, divinely free.

O thou most blessed swoon!
 O death that givest life, O gentle peace!
 Would that thy gracious boon
 Of joy might never cease,
 And from low earth-born cares bestow release!

. . .

Let then the glorious stream
 Of thy grand music, my Salinas, flow,
 That to the Good Supreme
 My senses wake, and so
 Remain for ever dead to things below.

TO FELIPE RUIZ¹

When, Philip, may it be,
 That loosed from prison I toward heaven shall rise,
 And in the circle see,
 That, ever moving, flies
 Farthest from Earth, fair Truth with unveiled eyes?

See, with new life begun,
 In the clear light of day full well, I ween,
 Distinct, yet ever one,
 What is and what hath been.
 And see life's source, its hidden purpose glean.

Surely I then shall trace
 How He, whom all things ever have obeyed,
 This Earth upon her base
 So fast and firm hath laid,
 This heaviest element so stable made.

¹ See, for original, *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 109; it is of fourteen verses.

Then shall these eyes of mine
See the great pillars, whereon Earth is founded,
See how the Power Divine
The angry sea hath bounded,
And the whole world with watchful care surrounded ;

And why the Earth doth quake,
Why the great waters rage I then shall know,
Where the north winds awake,
And their war-trumpets blow,
And why the ocean waves have ebb and flow ;

Where fountains have their birth ;
Who feedeth every stream with plenteous store ;
Who bringeth on the Earth
The frost and winter hoar ;
Who on the parched land the summer's heat doth pour ;

And who it is maintains
Above in regions pure, and holds asunder
The soft refreshing rains,
The snow, and God's great wonder—
The dazzling lightning and the rolling thunder ;

.

Then, too, I e'en shall learn
Who guides the stars, and makes them strong to save,
And with pure influence burn ;
And why in Ocean's wave
The two Bears ever fear themselves to lave ;

And likewise how is fed
The burning Ball, great source of life and day,
Why in the winter dead
So fast he speeds away,
And why in summer he hath longer stay.

Then last shall I behold
In that unmoving circle mansions bright,
The abode of joys untold,
With golden radiance dight,
Where dwell blest spirits bathed in heavenly light.

A PRAYER TO THE VIRGIN¹*(Lines written in Prison)*

Virgin, more pure than day,
 Humanity's chief glory, heavenly light,
 Thou, who art pitiful as thou art great,
 Cast down those orbs so bright,
 In this dark dungeon look on me, I pray,
 And see me weep, condemned by cruel fate ;
 And if no lower state
 Hath e'er been known than that wherein I languish,
 If by another's sin perforce I grieve,
 Pity, sweet Queen, mine anguish,
 And break my chains and my sore need relieve.

Virgin, in whose pure breast
 Found sweet repose of old the Holy Child,
 Whereby fair love the primal wrath could chase ;
 If thus to mercy mild
 Thou changest anger, sure this heart opprest
 Thou likewise wilt transform by plenteous grace ;
 Then Lady, show that face
 That Heaven and Earth for aye adore, and scatter
 The clouds that gather ; bid the Sun to shine,
 O gracious Queen, and shatter
 By thy great radiance this dark night of mine.
 O Virgin, grievous pain
 Bindeth my palsied tongue, forbidding speech,
 And in my breast my prayer unspoken lieth,
 Then hear thou, I beseech,
 The soul that in its travail mutely crieth.

LINES ON LEAVING PRISON²

Prisoned through envy, lies, and hate,
 Long within gloomy walls I pined,
 Ah ! truly blest are they that find
 Their happiness in low estate,
 And, aye rejoicing, live with quiet mind !

¹ The original poem, which is of ten stanzas, is to be found in *Colección de los mejores autores*, Tomo V, p. 47.

² See, for original, *Colección de los mejores autores*, Tomo V, p. 58.

These, far withdrawn from pleasures lewd,
To sweet, green fields and forests flee;
And there, with God for staff and food,
Do taste the bliss of solitude,
Unenvious, and from others' envy free.

SONNET ON A LADY¹

'And now with dawn of day my light doth raise
Her head from slumber, now her tresses bright
Binds in rich coil—and now her bosom white
And slender throat with finest gold o'erlays;
And now, dear saint, to Heaven turns her gaze,
Uplifting hands and eyes ('tis now she might
Haply take pity on my grievous plight);
And now with matchless art she sings and plays.'
By sweetest error led 'twas thus I spake,
And saw her beauteous self before me rise,
And bowed me low in love and reverent fear.
Yet soon from its fond dream my soul doth wake,
And know its folly. Then, ah me! mine eyes
Loosen the floodgates of full many a tear. (3)

NOTES ON LUIS DE LEON

(1) *This prison*. The body.

(2) *His lyre*. Throughout this poem, as with the early Christians of the Catacombs, Christ is represented as the youthful God, and as Orpheus with his lyre.

(3) *Full many a tear*. Pathos and concentrated passion are in this fine sonnet on one whom death has taken. I have not been able to find whether it refers to a real or imaginary experience.

¹ For original see *Las cien mejores poesías*, p. 60.

SAN JUAN DE LA CRUZ

(*St. John of the Cross*)

(1542-1591)

The true mystic sees in the universe but God and the soul; their close union is, as I have said, his one absorbing aspiration. Juan de Yepes, better known as San Juan de la Cruz, in life as in verse, best represents in Spain this spirit of mysticism, is indeed of its very essence. A Carmelite at the age of twenty-one he was sent by his Superior, who promptly recognized his brilliant gifts, to study at the University of Salamanca. At the age of twenty-five he came under the one great influence of his life, that, namely, of St. Theresa; she inspired him with the reforming ardour that was then animating her. He joined one of her early foundations, and, during the years when the new religious enthusiasm was at its best and brightest, achieved among male Carmelites the work that she, on her part, was carrying out among her spiritual daughters.

In the years following St. Theresa's death San Juan de la Cruz took up the defence of her devoted friend, the unhappy Gracian, as also of the persecuted Carmelite nuns. For this reason the enemies of the reformed order brought about San Juan's fall, and the Saint, who was, and still is, venerated as one more divine than human, died in disgrace. As the monks who loved him watched at his death-bed, bells rang out. 'What are they ringing for?' he asked. 'Matins,' they told him. 'Matins! I will sing them in heaven,' he murmured, and died kissing the crucifix.

Juan de la Cruz has not the philosophic grandeur of Luis of Leon or the sympathetic humanity of St. Theresa, but he is unique among Spanish lyrists of his day in the exquisite music of his verse, and in a certain bird-like and divine rapture that brings him close to the gate of heaven itself. He has, more-

over, the feeling of the true poet for the beauty and mystery of nature, and the artist's love of colour, life, and sunshine. Inspired by the Song of Songs, he sings, in the metaphor of human love, of the soul passing through the dark night of faith to union with the heavenly Spouse.

THE DARK NIGHT¹

Silent and dark the night,
(O blessed hour!) when by sweet longing led,
As by a lantern bright,
Forth from the house I fled,
While all within lay quiet as the dead.
Close-shrouded by the night,
(O blessed hour!) with wimple o'er my head,
I silently took flight,
And down the stairway sped,
While all within lay quiet as the dead.
Yea, in that night of bliss
In secret went my way all unespied—
The path I could not miss,
Without or light or guide
Save the heart's fire aglow within my side.
That fire 'twas led me on
Surer than daylight, howso bright it be,
Where waited for me One
That hath my heart in fee,
In trysting-place, where none our joys might see.
O night, thou too wast guide,
O night far dearer than the rising Sun,
O night that joined the Bride
In close communion
To her beloved Spouse, and made them one!
Upon my breast, that kept
His image close within it, at His ease
Behold, the Bridegroom slept,
While from the cedar-trees
There came the gentle fanning of the breeze.

¹ For the original, which is of eight verses, see *Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 150.

'Twas then I found my rest,
 And 'gainst my Well-beloved my face reclined ;
 So care that once opprest
 With grief fell far behind,
 While 'mid fair lilies peace reigned o'er my mind.

SONGS BETWEEN THE SOUL AND CHRIST HER SPOUSE ¹

O, whither art Thou sped ?
 Beloved, wherefore leavst Thou me to groan ?
 Thou, like the stag hast fled,
 While wounded and alone
 I call to Thee, but Thou from hence art gone.
 Ye shepherds that have been
 Tending your flocks on yonder mountain high,
 Tell me, if ye have seen
 My loved one passing by ;
 Tell Him for anguish I am like to die !
 Thee, my lost love, to find
 I needs must wander over hill and dale ;
 No flower I'll pluck or bind,
 Nor fear if beast assail,
 Passing rude fortress, palisade, and pale.
 Ye forests that the hand
 Of One I love right well did plant and sow,
 Thou green and pleasant strand,
 Where the sweet flowerets blow,
 Tell me, if through your paths ye saw Him go.

ANSWER OF ALL CREATED THINGS

A thousand gifts He strowed,
 As through the groves and glades He moved apace,
 And, gazing round, bestowed
 The sunshine of His face,
 Clothing them all in loveliness and grace.

¹ See, for original, *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 152.

Later, after the Bridegroom has made answer, come these verses :

THE BRIDE

Belovéd! Lord of mountains,
Of lonely valleys and of leafy brakes,
Lord of the gushing fountains,
The islets and the lakes,
The whispering breeze that amorous music makes.

Lord of the midnight calm,
Of rosy Dawn with every grace endued,
Of music breathing balm,
Of sylvan solitude ;
Lord of the Supper, of the Heavenly Food!

The foxes drive away,
For lo, our vine is breaking into flower !
A bed of roses gay
Prepare within this bower ;
Let none draw near us in this blissful hour !

Withhold thee, northern blast,
But come, thou South wind, and with wingéd feet
To my fair garden haste,
So that my Lord may eat
His Love-Feast 'mid fair flowers and odours sweet.

SONNET TO CHRIST CRUCIFIED

The following sonnet is one of the finest of Spanish lyrics, unique in its passionate simplicity and profound sincerity. The solemn beauty of its subject-matter lends itself to translation, though, apart from this, there is a subtle something that eludes it. It has been attributed to St. Francis Xavier, to Ignatius Loyola, and to St. Theresa. In spirit it might well have been hers, but her rugged verses forbid such an assumption. The poem, therefore, remains anonymous, and this perhaps is well, for he who composed it was assuredly no notoriety-hunter.

The religion expressed in the sonnet has the noble disinterestedness of the mysterious old woman of the East, whom the chronicler Joinville speaks of as carrying fire and water to burn Heaven and to quench Hell, that love may be without hope of reward or fear of punishment. Spanish religious art has given us certain exquisitely carved figures of Christ upon the Cross, and to such these verses form a fit pendant.

A N O N Y M O U S

TO CHRIST CRUCIFIED¹

16th or early 17th century

It moves me not, my God, to love of Thee,
That promised Paradise, so full of bliss,
Nor moves me with its fires the dread abyss,
That I, in fear thereof, from sin should flee.

Thou movst me, Lord ; it moves me to behold
Upon the Cross of shame that Form Divine ;
It moves me sore to count those wounds of Thine ;
Move me Thy death and torments manifold ;

Moves me Thy love, and I must needs adore
And serve Thee, Lord, e'en though of Heaven bereft,
And, though Hell were not, fear Thee evermore.

Naught needst Thou give this my poor heart to gain,
For, though of all my hopes no hope were left,
The love I bear thee now could never wane.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 161.

BARTOLOMÉ LEONARDO DE ARGENSOLA

(1562-1631)

Bartolomé Leonardo was the younger of two brothers who, living in an age when Spanish literature was at its zenith, that, namely, of Cervantes and Lope de Vega, enjoyed a high reputation as poets, historians, and men of learning. One of the greatest Latinists of his day, Bartolomé took for his models Nature and the great Ancients, more especially Horace. He is distinguished by the extreme purity, elegance, and polish of his style, and occasionally reaches, as in the poem translated below, a noble elevation of thought and language. He was uninfluenced by *Gongorism*, then at its height, and, like the great Lope, was the declared enemy of pedantry and affectation.

On the death of his brother, Lupercio, Bartolomé Argensola succeeded him in the office of historiographer to the House of Aragon, and for many years played a leading part in the literary life of Saragossa. He had previously been one of the chief ornaments at the Court of the accomplished Count of Lemos, Viceroy of Naples, whose rule was perhaps the most brilliant in the history of that city.

Argensola was fortunate in his life, and, in an age tossed by many storms and given up to intrigue, lived long years of peace and prosperity. He was a fine example of the noble-minded and highly-cultured Spanish gentleman; and it has been well said of him that, though among the great men of Aragon there are some more brilliant than he, there are none who emit a light more gentle and serene.

In the following sonnet the poet seeks a solution of the mystery that has baffled all men from Job downwards—the triumph of evil, ‘The oppressor’s wrong;’ ‘The spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes.’

SONNET¹

'Father of all men, say, since Thou art just,
Wherefore Thy will supreme doth e'en consent
That (dragging heavy chains the innocent)
The guilty mount the tribunal august.

Who giveth victory to the arm robust
That 'gainst Thy Law its strength hath ever spent,
While they that pay Thee honour reverent
Groan at the feet of conquerors unjust?

Waving victorious palms their way they wend,
These impious ones, while Virtue with bowed head
And tear-dimmed eyes must needs their joy bewail.'

These were my words, when smiling to me sped
A heavenly lady—'O, thou blind and frail,
Is then this Earth,' said she, 'the Spirit's end?'

LOPE FELIX DE VEGA CARPIO

(1562-1635)

It must be confessed that to most Englishmen Lope de Vega (as he is usually called) is a shadowy personage, and comparatively few people have read any of the 1,800 plays that have been ascribed to him. Yet the man, of whom we have so vague a knowledge, was, as Cervantes called him, 'a prodigy of nature.' For nearly fifty years he dominated the Spanish stage, and received during that time greater homage and richer rewards than have perhaps ever been bestowed on any other poet. All eyes followed him as he passed through the streets of Madrid. 'His daily walk', says Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly, 'was a royal procession.' In his magnificent funeral-ceremonies, which lasted for nine days, all the great and noble men of Spain took part, and the eulogies pronounced on him

¹ For original see *Las cien mejores poesías*, p. 104.

in the years following his death form a large volume. His versatility was such that he left hardly any branch of literature unattempted; it is, however, as the dramatist of supreme power that he is enthroned amongst his country's greatest. As such he does not belong to this little book, but as a lyric poet of charm and distinction he can in no way be omitted from it.

Lope, the man, is a psychological study as complex as interesting, superhuman in endowments and yet most human in his passions and many weaknesses. Born of parents of humble position in Madrid, the city where he spent the greater part of his life, he was a child of such marvellous precocity that he was dictating verses before he could write, and at the age of twelve produced a drama of considerable merit. After having acquired at the University of Alcalá de Henares a certain amount of ill-digested learning he formed a liaison with an actor's wife, the heroine of 'La Dorotea', one of his most admired works. When, later on, she deserted him for another lover, Lope made a libellous attack on her and her father, for which he was pursued by the law and banished from Madrid. He withdrew to Valencia, but two months later, though by such audacity he incurred no less a penalty than death, he returned to the capital in order to carry off a lady of high rank, Isabel de Urbina by name. After marrying her hurriedly by proxy, he escaped unpleasant consequences by embarking on one of the galleys of the Spanish Armada. He came back unscathed from the fatal expedition, actually bringing with him an epic of 11,000 lines, composed on board in moments of leisure!

Lope's first wife seems to have died in 1595, and three years later was replaced by a second one of much lower rank. Both wives found in him a husband gentle and generous, but one to whom, ardent and impressionable as he was, conjugal fidelity was apparently an impossibility. Lope, in fact, was a libertine, and much of his life was given up to a series of scandalous love-intrigues. All that can be said in his defence is, that he was no mere heartless sensualist, nor, in any of his relations

with women, coldly selfish like the youthful Goethe. He loved too easily, sinned, repented, and sinned again. 'A curse on all unhallowed love,' he cried in one of his intervals of passionate remorse. Though the flesh thus often triumphed over the spirit, Lope was a fervent Catholic, and in religion showed the sincerity and freedom from pose that was characteristic of him. He became a Familiar of the Inquisition, a member of the Third Order of St. Francis, and, after the death of his much-loved little son Carlos, and of his second wife, took holy orders. This last step led to no improvement in his morals, and it is undoubtedly to Lope that Cervantes alludes when, in the preface to the second part of *Don Quixote*, he speaks ironically of a Familiar of the Inquisition 'famed for his virtue'.

Lope lived long enough to see himself superseded by Calderon in the popular favour, and suffered bereavements which, as a man of a warm heart, he felt with intensity. In the year preceding his death two crushing blows befell him in the loss of his remaining son, Felix Lope, who was drowned at sea, and the elopement of a young daughter, deeply loved. Under the conviction that these sorrows were sent him as a chastisement for sin, he sank into a profound melancholy, frequently scourging himself till he bled. Yet, with a genius unimpaired by age, he worked steadily to the end, producing his two last poems only four days before his death. A short time previously he had spoken to friends of the intolerable anguish of life. Nearing his last hour he said that he would willingly exchange all the applause he had ever received for one more virtuous act to be laid to his credit. He died at the age of seventy-three, praying and holding a crucifix to his lips.

Lope, with all his sins, was lovable and of irresistible charm. His freedom from hypocrisy, his generosity to friends, his lavish charities, his ready response to a kindness received—all served to make him so. It has been remarked that no literary potentate has ever praised the work of contemporaries more freely, and, indeed, some of his swans more closely

resemble geese. He was gentle and chivalrous in his treatment of women, nor would he allow them to be slandered in his presence. His garden, with its rare flowers, was a special hobby, and a romp in it with his children was a favourite pastime.

It was not till late in life that Lope de Vega realized the pre-eminent importance of his dramas, dramas which he did not write with the intention of printing, and spoke of carelessly as 'the wild flowers of my garden'. His non-dramatic work is in itself immense, consisting of epics, pastorals, eclogues, poetic epistles, and innumerable lyrics of all kinds, including nearly 700 sonnets! The epics are not among his great achievements, and are now little read. The Epistles, written in the *terza rima*, are full of beauty and interest, while among the Eclogues is the deeply pathetic one (*A Filis*) on his young daughter's flight from his house, in which, after dwelling on his grief and loneliness and the bitter sting of her ingratitude, he sadly concludes with the reflection: 'As is the tree, so is the fruit.' His Ballads are among the freshest and loveliest of the great Spanish collection, and his sonnets, a few of which have been finely translated by Longfellow, are full of noble thought and high poetic beauty. The exquisite Pastoral, *Los Pastores de Belén* (The Shepherds of Bethlehem), as Ticknor well says, is 'as full of the tenderest feelings of Catholic devotion as one of Murillo's pictures'. In it is a Cradle-song, sung by the Virgin to the Holy Infant which is one of the most beautiful of Spanish lyrics (see Ticknor's translation of it).

Lope de Vega's work is singularly unequal. Carelessness, lack of finish, lack of the 'high seriousness' of the best poetry show themselves in much of it; it could hardly be otherwise, considering his miraculous rapidity of execution. At his best, however, he reaches a rare perfection of style, and at all times is distinguished by an amazing command of versification, grace, lightness of touch, and delicate sense of natural beauty. Much of his lyric poetry is in the Italian style, in the path laid down by Boscan and Garcilasso; inasmuch

as he criticized their methods he seems to have adopted Italian forms merely in obedience to fashion, and with the desire to please, characteristic of him. He was at his greatest when he followed his natural impulse, and was wholly Spanish. In the same way that Shakespeare ridiculed Euphuism it is interesting to see his great contemporary setting himself against *Gongorism*, the development of which was destined to become a deadly influence on Spanish literature.

The dramatist, who in the words of Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly, composed masterpieces 'as easily as he breathed', and who 'with all his faults is among the greatest of mankind', has laid bare his heart to us in certain beautiful poems, which are, therefore, apart from their intrinsic merit, of the deepest interest. One of the best is that of which I have translated a few stanzas, on the death of his little son. It was to this son that he dedicated his *Pastores de Belén*, and of whose death he says in another poem: 'Far better were it that I should die than that Carlos in the beginning of his morning should endure so long a night.'

ON THE DEATH OF CARLOS FELIX WHO DIED AT THE AGE OF SEVEN¹

Eternal King, this my begotten child,
Lo, with Thy blessing, must I needs surrender,
And humbly on Thine altar sacrifice;
For, if indeed a heart all undefiled,
Loving and gentle, pitiful and tender,
Be of all offerings of highest price,
It boots me not to bear
Phoenician spices rare,
Or perfumed, precious thing
Into Thy Presence bring;
These were of less sweet savour in Thine eyes;
I lay my heart, my Carlos at Thy feet.
A better gift than that which here doth beat!

¹ For original see *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, vol. xxxviii, p. 368. There are fifteen stanzas in the Spanish poem.

The new-fledged, little birdies, soft and tender,
Of diverse notes and hues, for thy delight (1)

I prisoned in the gilded cage's space ;
For thee it was I planted saplings slender
From leafy trees, and planted flowerets bright,
Wherein the better I might see thy face.

Yet hardly, Carlos mine,
All bathed in dew divine,
Wouldst thou the morning greet,
And breathe her fragrance sweet,
When lo, Death took thee in his chill embrace !
Congealed to ice the fair white lily lies,
Prone on the earth, though lifted to the skies !

O Carlos, what glad birds, divinely fair,
Do now delight thee, flying to and fro,
Through heavenly plains, on painted pinions wide.
O'er the eternal garden's treasure rare
Of richest beds, in many a golden row ;
Where beauteous hyacinths for aye abide,
More radiant far, I ween,
Than mortal eye hath seen !

O joy, for lo, I see
My child, where I would be,
Where is no care, nor aught of grief beside !
And lo, my heaviness by the blessed story
Of bliss to come is changed to light and glory !

FEARS IN HOURS OF GRACE ¹

When Thee, O King, to these poor lips I raise,
Hold the pure Sacrifice of Love unbounded,
O'erwhelmed by grievous sin, I kneel confounded,
The while Thy mercy doth my soul amaze.

And now, affrighted, I from hence would fly,
And now draw near Thee with repentant tears,
So, torn 'twixt hope and longing, doubts and fears,
Tremble in anguish, and for sorrow sigh.

Oh, turn toward me Thine eyes, my weakness see !
Lured by deceiving joys and fancies vain,
Alas ! So long I wander far from Thee !

¹ For original see *Las cien mejores poesías*, p. 118.

Great are my sins, yet grant, though foul their stain,
 Since in this hand Thou dost consent to be,
 That ne'er from me Thine own dear Hand be ta'en.

NOTE ON LOPE DE VEGA

(1) *For thy delight.* He here addresses his son.

FRANCISCO DE RIOJA

(1583 (?)–1659)

Francisco de Rioja was, like his contemporaries, Velasquez and Murillo, a native of Seville, where he grew to be a student at its university and a canon of its cathedral. It was in Seville that he first gained the good-will of the powerful Olivares through whom he obtained at Madrid the post of librarian to Philip IV. After the minister's fall Rioja retired to Seville. Here he was when his brilliant friend, Lope de Vega, addressed to him his poetic Epistle, 'The Garden', in which he speaks of Rioja as one who had forgotten the court with its stormy waves for the peaceful hours of solitary study.

Rioja's poems, small in number, but fine in quality, were unpublished in his life-time, and did not appear till the end of the eighteenth century. Besides sonnets of high merit he has left us a series of beautiful Odes or 'Silvas' (1) to various flowers. Of these the following is the most remarkable example. Its special note is that profound sense of beauty and melancholy realization of its fleetingness, that is to be felt in Ronsard's 'Mignonne, allons voir si la rose', or in Herrick's 'Daffodils', and which rouses in Waller the lament:

How small a part of time they share
 Who are so wondrous sweet and fair.

TO THE ROSE¹

Thou pure and glowing rose,
 Bright as the sunshine, hail!
 Born at the dawn of day
 How comst thou into life so glad and gay,
 When well thou knowst that Heaven hath given thee light
 But for the moment of a swift bird's flight?
 Nor may the sweet buds of thy stem avail,
 Nor all thy beauty's dower
 To stay but one brief hour
 The feet of Fate that all too swiftly mows.
 The orb that e'en doth send
 From Heaven his beams shall know
 At last, I fear, an end,
 And Death shall rob him of his ruddy glow.
 To form those leaves that close around thy heart
 Love from his wings the softest feathers gave,
 And gold from his bright locks to deck thy brow,
 O faithful image of his beauty rare!
 Then bathed thee in the blood of that most fair
 And lovely goddess, born of the foamy wave;
 And yet, O purple flower, can thy sweet face
 Not move the scorching ray to show thee grace?
 Behold, his fiery dart
 Of thy bright beauty all too soon bereaves thee,
 And pale and faded leaves thee;
 With flaming wings no sooner wouldst thou fly
 Than to the earth they drooping sink and die;
 Alas! So soon is done
 The life but just begun,
 I needs must doubt if Dawn with dewy breath
 And weeping eyes laments thy birth or death.

NOTE ON FRANCISCO DE RIOJA

(1) *Silvas*. Poems in the nature of odes, first brought to perfection in Spanish by Garcilasso de la Vega, and composed of lines of seven and eleven syllables.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 233.

JOSÉ DE ESPRONCEDA

(1808-1842)

The hundred years that followed the death of Rioja was a period in Spain of complete political, moral, and intellectual decadence. During the reign of the imbecile Charles II (1665-1700) the only new lyric poems worthy of mention are those of the Mexican nun, Juana Inés de la Cruz, a mystic of considerable talent. For the first sixty years of the eighteenth century Spain was quite without any school of poetry. French influence was paramount, and all national feeling was dormant. Later a small group of men of letters, the so-called School of Salamanca, sought to rouse their country from her long sleep. Of these the most gifted was the poet, Juan Meléndez Valdés, who in 1785 published poems of high merit. His Odes, *Los Besos de Amor*, have been much praised by M. Foulché-Delbosc.

Then came the French Revolution, the early years of which, undarkened as they were by Jacobin excesses, must have been good to live in. Under the potent influence of the French philosophers, the down-trodden lifted up their heads and scented freedom. The world regained for a time its youth. High aspirations filled men's hearts; they dreamed of a distant past that was an age of gold, and saw before them a future of brotherhood and equality. These fair hopes were belied by twenty years of terrific warfare, followed by the 'Holy Alliance', which threatened the destruction of all that the lovers of liberty held dear. Not unnaturally, therefore, in the European literature of the early nineteenth century there is mingled with a spirit of revolt, which is stronger than ever, a tone of bitter disillusionment, akin to despair and a cynical disbelief in human virtue, moods familiar in a greater or less degree to all who have read Byron, Shelley, Alfred de Musset, Heine, or Leopardi.

It was in the days, then, when the chains of tyranny were still strong, that José de Espronceda, a genuine *enfant du siècle*, lived his short life, and produced work, which small as it is in quantity, entitles him to a foremost place among the lyric poets of his century, and makes him the chief representative of the Romantic School in Spain. The element of romance plays, indeed, an important part in Espronceda's whole career, as well as in his poems, which to be thoroughly appreciated must be studied in connexion with the life which they reflect.

During the Peninsular War his father served as Colonel in the Spanish army ; and it was while both parents were on the march that the future poet was born in a remote corner of Estremadura, and, as it is said, in some shepherd's hut. His boyhood was spent in Madrid, where he was a favourite pupil in the school of the liberal-minded poet, Lista, who was quick to recognize his genius. Growing up under the evil government of the base and contemptible Ferdinand VII, the reviver of the Inquisition, Espronceda became a conspirator at the age of fifteen, and with his schoolfellows formed a secret club against the tyrant. Plots, in fact, as well as imprisonments, figure largely in a life which was one of constant rebellion against the powers that were.

As a youth of eighteen either political necessity, or love of adventure, brought him to Lisbon, where for a time with other Spanish liberals he suffered imprisonment ; later he betook himself to London, England being then the one country in which political refugees could hold themselves secure. From thence after a stay of some two years, he went to Paris, where he took part in the Revolution of 1830, planned, with other ardent young spirits, an expedition for the liberation of Poland, and fought by the side of the ill-fated De Pablo, when this latter entered North Spain in a mad attempt to overthrow the government of Ferdinand. On this king's death in 1833 a general amnesty was proclaimed, upon which Espronceda returned to Madrid, and, during Queen Cristina's Regency, spent several years in serving, or setting

at defiance, the authorities, according to the dictates of his restless excitable nature.

In 1840 the publication of a volume containing the greater part of his poems placed him among the most famous men of the day. A few months later Espartero became Regent, and Espronceda, who was then made a member of the Cortes, showed himself disposed to a steadier, if more prosaic, life of public service. Hopes of marriage promised him more permanent happiness than he had yet known, when a severe chill, followed by quinsy, brought his life to an untimely end.

The tragic story of Espronceda's connexion with the young Spanish girl, Teresa Mancha, remains to be told for the better comprehension of the poem, much of which I have translated below. The two first met in Lisbon, where Teresa, then fifteen years old, was with her father a fugitive from Spain. Two years later they again saw each other in London, Teresa having been in the meantime married by her father to a wealthy Spanish merchant, by whom she had already a child. Young and passionate, she and Espronceda easily overcame any scruples they may have had, and Teresa, in boy's clothes, escaped with the poet to Paris, where for some years they lived together at Passy. Later, when in Madrid, Teresa became bitterly jealous, sought to have the poet stabbed, fled from him, was forcibly brought back, and finally separated herself from him, leaving with him a daughter born of their union. In 1839, when only twenty-eight, she died in great poverty, and had a pauper's burial. The portrait preserved of her shows her to have been as beautiful as she was unhappy; and whether the charges made against her in the poem were true or false, it was an unworthy and ignoble act of her former lover to proclaim the infamy of one whose lips were closed in death. It is, however, the literary merit of this poem that chiefly concerns us. The Canto—an elegy of forty-four stanzas, is indeed magnificent, and never did Espronceda reach a higher poetic level. Its heart-rending pathos, the passionate sincerity of its mingled tenderness, remorse, and bitterness, the splendour and the music of its verse hold one spell-bound,

and give it a unique place among the lyrics of Spain. Truly Espronceda wrote it as with his very life-blood.

The *Ode to the Sun*, published in 1834, and based on a Hymn by Ossian, is full of splendid imagery, and the verse has the majestic movement and solemn music that harmonize with the subject. In his metrical gift Espronceda has been well compared with Swinburne, whose rhythms, as a writer has said, have 'more affinity to the sweeping majesty of Spanish than to any other modern tongue'.

Espronceda willingly posed as the bold, bad man, but was, in reality, far from being the Don Juan of his beautiful poem, *El Estudiante de Salamanca*. All human nature is more or less complex, and Espronceda in particular is a man made up of varying moods and contradictions. Unstable, passionate, self-centred, and vain, he was at the same time capable of feeling and acting nobly, and could forget himself in great causes. He was quick to sympathize with the oppressed, and his most intimate friend testifies to the generous warmth of his nature and to his many secret charities. His betrothed, moreover, mourned his death deeply enough to forswear marriage for his sake.

Much has been said about Espronceda's resemblance to Byron, both as poet and man. Who can fail to see it, and why need Spanish critics, jealous of their countryman's fame, seek to minimize the influence that was so great in Europe of the early nineteenth century? That Espronceda, with his delicately receptive nature, to some extent modelled himself on Byron, has to be admitted; so also, in a less degree, he was inspired by the great French poets of the Romantic School. His originality consisted in his *treatment* of ideas, that were either floating in the air or came to him more directly from special sources.

The specimens given will, I hope, encourage readers to turn to the original poems, and learn to know at first hand the lyrical beauty of the *Diablo Mundo*, the ringing patriotism of the war-songs, the splendid vigour of *El Pirata*, the power of that saddest of poems, *A Jarifa*, and the solemn tenderness of the *Ode to Night*.

HYMN TO THE SUN.¹

Hail to thee Sun ! Oh, list and stay thy course !
 To thee in ecstasy I make my prayer,
 The while my soul, aglow with fire like thine,
 Uplifts her wings and boldly cleaves the air,
 To pay her tribute to thy power divine.
 Oh, that this voice of mine in wondrous wise,
 Rending the clouds asunder,
 To thee, great Sun, might rise,
 Drowning with words sublime the dreaded thunder,
 And, in the heavens' blue vault,
 Bidding thee in thy mighty journey halt !

Oh, that the inner flame which lights the mind
 Would lend its virtue to my feeble sight,
 So that no longer with thy beams made blind
 Mine eager eyes I might undazzled raise,
 And on thy radiant face, divinely bright,
 Might even dare to rest my constant gaze !
 How I have ever loved thee, glorious Sun !
 A child, with wondering eyes,
 My life but just begun,
 How oft I longed to reach thee in the skies ;
 And on what rapture fed
 As thy great chariot on its pathway sped !

From where the Orient rears his golden crest,
 Whose borders Ocean girds with many a pearl,
 E'en to the limits of the shadowy West
 The dazzling hem of thy bright garment gleams,
 And thou thy shining banner dost unfurl,
 And bathest all the world in thy pure streams.
 From thy broad brow the light of day thou sendest,
 Great source of life and seat,
 And of thy calm, majestic disk thou lendest
 The fertilizing heat,
 Amid the spheres on high
 Rising triumphant in the azure sky.

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 285.

Calmly thou scal'st the Zenith's golden height,
In Heaven's high hall enthroned supreme thou reignest,
And there with living flames and splendour dight,
Thy fiery steeds thou reinest.
From thence full speedily thy way thou takest,
Till down the steep incline
Thy rich and trailing locks of gold thou shakest
On Ocean's heaving, tremulous floor of brine :
Then in deep, watery bowers
Thy glory dies away,
And one more day Eternity devours.

What ages, Sun, what ages hast thou seen,
Thus swallowed by the gulf no plummet measures,
What mighty nations, what imperial pride,
What pomp and splendour, and what heaped up treasures !
'Fore thee, what were they ? Leaves blown far and wide
From the great forest—withered, light and sear,
Eddying, all tempest-tossed,
Till the blast drove them hence, and they were lost.

And thou, alone from wrath divine exempt,
Hast seen submergèd all the sinful world,
When driving rains were by Jehovah poured
On man and beast ; the pent up winds were hurled
O'er heaving seas, and loud the billows roared ;
From rifted cloud the deafening thunder pealed
In dreadful menace ; and in anguished throes
The Earth upon her diamond axle swayed ;
O'er hill and plain uprose
One huge, tumultuous sea—a watery grave.
Trembled the mighty deep,
While thou, our lord, as one awake from sleep,
Above the stormy waste didst build thy throne,
Robed in funereal black,
With face that darkly gleams,
Till on new worlds thou sendest healing beams.

And wilt thou ever see
The ages rise and fall, and yield their place
In never-ending change like restless waves,
That, hurrying o'er the Ocean, crowd and break,
Recede, then sweep along in their fierce chase ?
Whilst thou, O Sun, triumphant and sublime,
In lonely splendour dwellst,
Eternal witness of the march of time.

And wilt thou unextinguished thus abide,
 And will thy giant furnace burn for aye,
 Its fierceness unconsumed? Wilt thou, O Sun,
 Thus proudly through the heavens go thy way,
 Watching the myriad ages wax and wane,
 And be alone eternally unmoved,
 Holding for ever undisputed reign?
 Not so—The Conqueror, Death,
 Albeit in hour unknown,
 Will overtake and claim thee for his own.
 Perchance, who knows? Thou art but some poor spark
 Of sun more vast, that on another world
 Greater than ours, with light yet more divine,
 And splendour unimagined once did shine!

Rejoice then, Sun, in this thy strength and youth,
 For, when the dreaded day draws nigh at last,
 The day when thou from thy great throne wilt fall,
 (Loosed from the mighty hands
 Of Him that all commands,)
 And in eternity shalt hide thy Ball,
 In thousand fragments shattered, wrecked and torn,
 Immersed in seas of fire,
 Thy course accomplished, and thy strength outworn,
 Then thy pure flame in darkness, of a truth,
 Will wholly cease, thy glory be o'erpast,
 Shrouded for ever by the pall of night,
 No vestige left of thy refulgent light.

TO TERESA ¹

(From *El Diablo Mundo*, 1841)

Visions of days outworn, why do ye grow
 Thus ever more distinct round memory's page?
 Would ye increase my heavy weight of woe,
 And 'gainst a broken heart new battle wage?
 Alas! Of all the joy of long ago
 But groans remain, nor do dry eyes assuage
 The ache of bitter grief; and tears repressed
 Are tears of gall that flood the heavy breast.

¹ For the original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 301.

The nightingales sang loudly in those hours,
The Sun shone brightly, and my full heart beat ;
Gently the breezes whispered 'mid the flowers,
The forests murmured low in answer sweet,
The fountains told of love in fragrant bowers.
Illusions all it irks me to repeat !
Alas ! How full of bright, entrancing joys
Appeared the world, its tumult and its noise.

This life of mine seemed in those happy days
Like some tall vessel, that in all her pride
First leaves the port, and her gay flag displays,
When, carried by the wind o'er waters wide ;
The deep, hoarse voice of Ocean chants her praise,
As she full merrily doth onward glide ;
The surging billows leap around her bows,
While she triumphantly her pathway ploughs.

Ah me ! O'er life's great sea I took my flight
Aglow with love. On my smooth brow was seen
Youth's glorious sunshine ; likewise shone the light
Of early dawn within my soul, I ween :
And love abode there, like some fountain bright
Amid the freshness of the woodland green ;
And from that fountain came abundant streams
Of joyous aspirations and sweet dreams.

And love subdued me, filled me with desire
Nobly to spend my days—A secret yearning
Grew ever stronger, mighty to inspire
My inner self. My thoughts were ever turning
Toward all things great, and, with the holy fire
That freedom's torch aye kindles, I was burning ;
While, full of ardent faith, I sought to rise
To deeds of glory and of high emprise.

There is a voice sweeter than tongue can tell,
That speaks in hours of lonely reverie,
A pure and holy prompting, strong to quell
All things of earth, and set the spirit free ;
There is a potent and mysterious spell,
That fires the mind with love and ecstasy,
And bids the palpitating heart to fly
After the wondrous vision pure and high.

Oft from an alien shore, I used to gaze
 On many a vessel riding o'er the foam,
 That, seen afar in the Moon's silvery rays,
 Sailed for my native land, my well-loved home ;
 Or, when the western sky was all ablaze,
 As the Sun sank, in solitude would roam,
 And roaming seemed to hear a woman's voice,
 Whose gentle notes made my young heart rejoice.

Woman, as love first sees in hours of sleep,
 A being to the soul alone appealing,
 The echo of a tender whisper deep,
 Like strange, sweet music o'er the spirit stealing,
 Woman, who bids love's ardent flame to leap,
 The joys that beckon from afar revealing,
 Joys that the fancy decks in colours bright,
 That fill the yearning heart with fond delight.

Love was the vision that my soul hath seen,
 Love that created nymphs in woods and streams,
 Or naiads, that in rivers crystalline
 Have their pure being (so man fondly dreams).
 It was but Love, mourning for what hath been,
 Mourning for Eden and its heavenly gleams,
 Love, that in that fair garden had its birth,
 And wanders now disconsolate on Earth.

O sacred Love, bright flame that dost arise
 And purify the soul ! O memory
 That speakest of a bygone paradise !
 O hope that tellest of the joys to be !
 Thou vanishest, and leavest tears and sighs !
 Ah, wondrous woman that I thought to see !
 With what fair image, beautiful and pure,
 Did Love my youthful fantasy allure !

Teresa ! Fatal name ! Alas ! my tears,
 Where are ye hidden, that ye do not flow ?
 Wherefore, Oh, wherefore, as in other years
 Bring ye no comfort to my bitter woe ?
 O ye, who ne'er have felt the pain that sears
 And burns the tortured heart, who do not know
 The anguish that in tears finds no relief,
 Pity at least my torments and my grief !

That to eternal pain, Teresa mine,

Such bliss should change, what prophet had foretold,
Such innocent love, such gladness all divine,

Such heavenly rapture and such dreams of gold ?
Who might alas ! forecast the day malign

When, the spell broken, fate with fingers cold,
Should cause the bandage from our eyes to fall,
And turn our sometime mirth to bitter gall ?

E'en now, Teresa, in thy loveliness,

Like some fair butterfly with wings of flame
Thou hoverest before me, and I bless

The beauty that my every sense o'ercame ;
Thou art a dream no pen can e'er express.

I see thee now, young rose, thou art the same ;
Again I hear thy voice, I feel thee nigh,
And breathe the perfumed sweetness of thy sigh.

Those lovely eyes, that stole from Heaven their blue,

After long years I see before me still,
See too that colour, like the roseate hue

Of snow new-fallen at Sunrise, that doth fill
With envy May's young morning, bathed in dew ;

And even now, alas ! I feel the thrill
Of those brief hours of joy, unmixed with pain,
When early love held undivided reign.

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Then came dark hours—What wretch without remorse

Robbed thee of purity ? Alas ! Alas !
Of old thou wast of all things pure the source,

A limpid rivulet, as clear as glass,
Later a torrent dark, with eddying course,

Forcing its way 'mid crags and tangled grass,
And then a fetid pool of water slack,
Losing itself in mire, corrupt and black.

Tell me, how camst thou on this earth to light,

Cleaving the air, bright star of early morn ?
Angel, who bade thee from the heavens take flight,

And sojourn in this vale of tears forlorn ?
Circling thy brow there floated dazzling white

The seraph's veil, in heavenly mansion worn ;
And bringing glory from the realms above
Another heaven didst thou find in love.

Ah me! A fallen angel, weak and frail
Is woman, fashioned out of impure clay.
A beauteous being, born to weep and wail,
Or soul-less in the world live out her day.
'Twas the first woman Satan did assail,
When into Paradise he stole his way,
Within her kindling flame that many an age
Hath been of all her sons the heritage.

The fount of love in Heaven hath its start,
And freely flows on earth, that all may drink ;
And, as it flows, behold in every part
Fair flowers of lively hue adorn its brink.
But oh, beware ! for when the burning heart
Would fain draw nigh, it needs must backward shrink ;
The stream, envenomed by the powers infernal
For them that taste thereof hath tears eternal.

Alas ! The years of dear illusion passed,
And fond deceiving fancy vanishèd,
And all the hopes we cherished followed fast,
While heavy loomed the coming years as lead.
It is but for a day love's roses last !
The flowers turned into briars, their leaves hung dead,
And of the glory that we thought to see
Alone remains a tomb, a memory !

And thou art happy, that by death hast gained
A place wherein to hide thee from the Sun,
When, fronted by despair, alone remained
The bitterness of tears, thou wretched one ;
When by a hapless fate thou wast constrained
To bear the brand of shame, then, all undone,
Thou wast by death borne far away from strife,
To find beyond the grave a second life.

By memory pursued, by storm-winds tossed,
In torture worse than death thy days were spent,
Thy flower-like beauty dimmed, thy fragrance lost,
Thy life a desert, wherein came and went
The blast of passion, where an early frost
Chilled thy poor heart, and left it dried and rent,
Thy very sons forsook thee for another,
Denying thee the sacred name of mother.

Oh cruel, too cruel ! Alas !—And I the while
 Mine anguish deep within my bosom hide ;
 Checking my tears, I force my lips to smile,
 And from the world no longer turn aside ;
 Concealing black despair, by many a wile,
 The rending pains with laughter I deride,
 Divert myself with tearing shred by shred
 The heart that lies within me cold and dead.

Be glad while yet ye may ! The crystal sphere
 Revolves in golden light, and life is fair.
 Whoever yet could stay in her career
 The Earth, that bids rejoice ? See, in mid air
 The radiant sunbeams dance ! See, year by year
 The fields and forests their Spring vesture wear !
 Let then deep-seated sorrow change to mirth :
 Who recks of one more corpse (1) laid low in earth ?

NOTE ON ESPRONCEDA

(1) *Who recks of one more corpse.* There are those who see in this powerful verse mere bitterness and hardness. To my mind it is the most deeply pathetic of the whole poem.

JUAN VALERA

(1824-1905)

Juan Valera's cheerful serenity, the 'gracious flow of his large and simple style', must be my apology for bringing his best known novel, *Pépita Jiménez*, again before the public, and this in spite of the complete translation, which already exists of it, with its introduction by Mr. Gosse.

But recently the horrors of a war, infinitely greater than humanity has hitherto known, were our daily food. We were forced to familiarize ourselves with life such as Teutonic greed and lust for power had made it ; and it is well to shake off for a brief space the tragic memories of these dark times and 'steep our senses in forgetfulness' in Valera's fair garden of Andalusia, full of sunshine, poetry, and quiet mirth. We

need also, I think, for other reasons, the mental refreshment and comfort of Valera's genial optimism. The influence of the French school of naturalism, of which Zola was the chief exponent, has long set its mark on the novelists of Europe. Led by these one might suppose that, outside carnal passion, there is little worth writing about. D'Annunzio is morbidly obsessed by the one idea; its taint is seen in Ibáñez and in Pardo Bazán—Spain's greatest woman novelist—as in some of our English writers. Then, again, even when this side of life does not absorb the best energies of the modern novelist, he is apt to give himself up to problems, and to make art the handmaid of Sociology. Valera, however, like the true artist, is solely inspired by his love of beauty; and his genius, like that of Scott, is thoroughly sane, revealing itself without the nauseous unpleasantness that some writers still seem to think its necessary accompaniment.

Valera was not only a genius, but a delightful personality, the Spanish gentleman *par excellence*, refined, genial, gracious, and urbane. He was born at Cabra in the mountains of Andalusia, some thirty miles from the ancient city of Cordova, and was of aristocratic birth and easy means. He spent a large portion of his life as a diplomatist, representing Spain in Naples, Lisbon, Petrograd, Frankfort, Rio de Janeiro, and Washington, thus gaining the wide experience of life and men, essential to the novelist. He lived his last years in Madrid, where he was a prominent literary and social figure. He died of apoplexy at the age of seventy-four, after having suffered from blindness for some time previously.

As Mr. Havelock Ellis remarks, great works of fiction, such as *Don Quixote*, *Crusoe*, or *Wilhelm Meister*, are produced by men of a ripe age. This holds good of Valera, who wrote *Pepita Jiménez* at the age of fifty. The book at once established his fame as a novelist. It is, on the whole, the most representative of Spanish novels, and the one that is most appreciated outside Spain itself. Others of high merit appeared later—*El Comendador Mendoza* and *Doña Luz*, which Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly places even above *Pepita*

in psychological knowledge. These were followed by *Juanita la Larga*, the only one of his books dealing entirely with rustic life, and the fine novel *Genio y Figura*. Valera was also the author of certain poems, somewhat frigid and academic in character, while in his *Cartas Americanas* he shows himself to be an excellent critic, and one of the first to recognize the genius of Rubén Darío.

His novels, however, are his chief glory, though even these, in spite of the enthusiastic praise given to them by critics like Coventry Patmore, have, with the exception of *Pepita*, never thoroughly taken hold of the Spanish public. A certain aristocratic aloofness in Valera seems to account for this. He never drew his inspiration from the great movements of the day, nor did he, like his more popular contemporary, Galdós, write novels with a direct religious, moral, or social purpose. His books, however, are real masterpieces, and speak for themselves. Valera is a genuine son of Andalusia, the most favoured province of Spain. As such he has something of the ancient Greek in sweetness and humanity; he has the Hellenic love of beauty, and the artistic sense of balance and proportion. He, at the same time, followed in his literary work the best traditions of Spain. He is like Cervantes or Velasquez—in his power of combining harmoniously a realism, that is wholly free from grossness, with a noble idealism. Of the first-named he is also a worthy descendant in delicate humour, knowledge of human nature, and philosophic insight.

In *Pepita Jiménez* the scene lies in Andalusia. It is a delightful idyll, and a vivid picture of country life in Southern Spain. Valera wrote it, so he tells us, when he was fresh from the reading of the Mystics, and conceived the idea of portraying the struggle between divine and human love. Human love triumphs, and the hero renounces his project of becoming a priest for marriage with the woman he loves. The author, however, is careful not to shock the sensibilities of the devout Catholic, by clearly showing that the young candidate has no real vocation for the priestly life.

Pepita is a romance of young love, and a delicious atmo-

sphere of youth and freshness, together with the fragrance of the country, fills each page of the beautiful, simple story. The hero and heroine are full of charm. Pepita is one of the sweetest types of womanhood to be met with in fiction, and the character of Don Luis de Vargas, her lover, is presented with humour and sympathy. The secondary personages are finely drawn, and some of them are worthy of Scott himself. There is, to begin with, the hero's father, Don Pedro, a well-to-do squire of fifty-five, whose love for his son and heir is such as to make him at once renounce all pretensions to Pepita's hand, when his quick eye sees him, half unconsciously, falling a prey to her charms. The Vicar is another delightful character-study, a man full of simple piety and charity. Not the least noteworthy, and perhaps the most typically Spanish, is Antoñona, Pepita's old nurse and confidante.

The novel is given for the most part in a series of letters, chiefly those of the hero to his uncle, the Dean, to whom his education had been entrusted. Don Luis is a mystic, eager to forsake the world of which he knows nothing, and bent on carrying the Gospel to the heathen of the far East. While full of these high aspirations he, at the outset of the story, obeys his father's wish, and returns to his home on a visit before carrying out his project of taking the priestly vows. There is a wide gulf between the ardent young visionary and the father, a widower of easy morals; but the affectionate tenderness of Don Pedro soon breaks down all barriers, and wins the young man's love.

As for Don Pedro, instead of finding in his son the clerical bigot as he had feared, he discovers in him one after his own heart, generous and handsome, manly, and of noble and aristocratic bearing, a son, in fact, who might worthily succeed to the family honours and carry on the family name. Believing, however, that his son's intention of entering the Church was irrevocable, Don Pedro had, before the visit took place, begun to pay his addresses to the beautiful Pepita, who, married by an ambitious mother to a rich old man at the age of sixteen, is a widow of twenty at the time the story begins.

Don Pedro, ere long, takes his son to Pepita's house, and the son as in duty bound, proceeds to take careful stock of the lady, who may later become his step-mother. The potent charm and sweetness of the girl, in whom he had thought to find the mere provincial coquette, reveal themselves little by little in his letters to his uncle. He notes her beauty, her quiet dignity, the frank serenity of her eyes, the delicate refinement of her hands, and thus he writes of what he sees :

'One can see she takes special care of these hands of hers. After all it is an excusable weakness. I believe St. Theresa had the same little vanity when young, and yet this did not prevent her from becoming a very great saint. There is, indeed, something so distinguished, so aristocratic in a lovely hand, something symbolical of the whole being. Is not the hand the instrument of all our actions, the means by which the intellect gives outward form to all its conceptions, expresses its will, and exercises the power that God has given to man over all other created beings? Pepita's hands are as transparent as alabaster, lightly tinged with pink, and in their delicate blue veins one sees the pure blood coursing, hands with tapering fingers and of perfect shape; surely the owner of such could never harbour impure thought, base purpose or gross idea that would be at war with the perfect members that should execute them! . . .

'As for her eyes I think she does not know their power. She seems to think that eyes are meant to see with, and have no other use; and yet I have always heard that young and pretty women make of their eyes a weapon of offence, a powerful electric battery, by which they war upon men's hearts and hold them captive. Not such certainly are Pepita's eyes, in whose untroubled depths there dwells the peace of Heaven. But their glance is in no wise one of cold indifference. On the contrary, they are full of charity and sweetness. They fix themselves with quiet benevolence upon a ray of light, a flower or even some inanimate object, and with still greater benevolence and gentler sympathy upon some human being; and yet the human being in question, young, gallant, and bold though he be, dares not presume to read in their calm serenity more than charity and good will, or at the most a friendly preference. . . .

'But I see that unawares I am falling into the very fault, for which I blame the Vicar, and am talking of Pepita Jiménez

and of nothing else. But, after all, it is natural, for here everybody does the same. It is as if the whole village were full of the spirit, thoughts, and image of the wonderful woman, who is either an angel or the most accomplished coquette. But no, coquette she is not! One has but to look at Pepita to see that she is sincerity itself. The calm repose of her graceful bearing, her slender form, her smooth intelligent brow, the sweet pure light of her eyes, all unite to form a perfect harmony in which there is no jarring note.

‘How I regret that I have ever come here, and must perforce remain a yet longer time! Hitherto I have spent my days in your house or in the Seminary, living with my companions and masters, knowing the outside world in theory only. Now all at once, though only in a village, I see myself launched into the world and its entanglements; and by a thousand profane objects am tempted away from my studies, prayers, and meditations.’

The wise uncle gives prudent counsels, and Don Luis fights manfully against Pepita’s charms. An excellent opportunity for self-mortification soon presents itself. Don Pedro invites Pepita and certain friends to accompany him on an expedition to an estate of his, a few miles beyond the village. The road is a mere rough track. Driving, therefore, being impossible, most of the party go on horseback. Don Luis, however, never having learnt to ride, is obliged to mount a quiet mule, and go at a walking pace by the side of his aunt, Doña Casilda (a lady of some fourteen or fifteen stone), with whom is also the good old vicar. The expedition is charmingly described, and with much quiet humour, so I will give it as it stands, though with certain abbreviations and omissions.

‘As for Pepita, not knowing that she could ride, I had expected to see her, like my aunt, on a donkey with its *jamugas* (1). To my surprise, however, she appeared in a riding habit on a fiery and spirited black and white horse, which she managed with remarkable grace and skill.

‘It filled me with delight to see her fine horsemanship, but, from the moment of her appearance, I began to feel keenly mortified at the sorry part I was playing in the company of the good *Padre* and my stout aunt, Doña Casilda, forming

with them a highly pacific rear-guard, while the illustrious cavalcade capered, pranced, and galloped along, giving numerous displays of equestrian skill.

‘It at once struck me that, because I cut so poor a figure, Pepita glanced at me with compassion. My cousin Currito, on the other hand, gave me a very waggish look, and began straightway to tease and torment me. Good uncle, applaud, I pray you, my patience and resignation. All this I bore, and remained outwardly calm, but oh, how I suffered inwardly! There they were, cantering along at a fine pace, running races, and returning to the Vicar and myself, while we ambled on, quiet and patient as the beasts that bore us, with the good Doña Casilda jogging between us.

‘I did not even have the consolation of the Padre’s invariably delightful conversation, nor that of indulging in my own thoughts and dreams, and of silently admiring the beautiful country that we were traversing. Doña Casilda is a woman of a really terrible loquacity, and we were obliged to listen to her. First, she regaled us with all the village gossip, then she entertained us with a list of her many accomplishments. She explained to us how to make sausages, black puddings, puff pastry, and a hundred other savoury dishes. In the dressing of pigs, and in all domestic and culinary matters, she has, she tells us, no equal, unless it be Antoñona, Pepita’s old nurse and housekeeper.

‘In spite of the beauty of our road to the Pozo de la Solana I was inwardly chafing, and could enjoy nothing. When at last we reached the Villa and dismounted, it was as if a great weight were taken from me, as if indeed it had been I, who carried the mule, rather than the mule me.

‘We then, on foot, went over the whole estate, which is magnificent, and withal most varied and extensive. First comes a long succession of old or newly-planted vineyards, then a great olive plantation, lastly a grove of the finest oaks in all Andalusia. The water drained from the Pozo de la Solana forms a deep, clear stream, to which flock all the birds of the country to drink.

‘Following the course of the stream one comes upon deep ravines, where there are numerous poplars and other lofty trees, which, together with a great mass of shrubs and bushes, form a dark and tangled labyrinth. A thousand wild and fragrant plants grow there spontaneously, and it is certainly difficult to imagine anything more rural and sequestered than these woodland regions, full of peace and silence. During

the fiery heat of mid-day, when the Sun, from a cloudless sky, pours down his light in great waves upon the earth beneath, one can well imagine that these depths would inspire the mysterious awe that belongs to the hours of night. Here one can picture to oneself the life of ancient patriarchs, of heroes and shepherds of *primaeval* times, and of the visions that haunted them in the midst of the noontide brightness, of gods and goddesses, nymphs and angels.

‘As we were passing through this thicket there came a moment, I know not how, when Pepita and I found ourselves side by side, with the others at some distance behind us. A strange thrill went through me. It was the first time that I had ever been alone with her, and this in a place so solitary, and at the moment when I was conjuring before me the sinister or beneficent visions belonging to the early ages of mankind. Pepita had left her long riding-skirt in the house, and was walking in a short one that in no way hindered the graceful freedom of her movements. A charming little Andalusian hat was daintily poised upon her head. She was carrying her riding-stick, which seemed the magic wand of an enchantress, bent on casting her spell over me.

‘And here I must make bold once more to praise to you her beauty, which in these sylvan haunts seemed to me all the more wonderful. The precaution that certain ascetics recommend of forcing oneself to realize beauty like hers defaced by years and infirmities, or already in the embrace of Death, corrupt and preyed upon by worms, presented itself involuntarily to my mind; involuntarily, I say, because I do not consider that a precaution so hideous was a necessity. No base and carnal thought, no suggestion of the Evil One troubled at that moment my reason, nor succeeded in infecting my will or my senses. What did occur to me was in fact an argument which to my mind, at least, was a proof of the uselessness of such a step. Beauty, the creation of a divinely perfect art, may be fragile and ephemeral, but the idea of it is eternal, and, once clearly seen, it lives in the mind of man an immortal life. This woman’s beauty, such as it manifests itself to me to-day, will disappear in a few brief years; that lovely form, those perfect lines, that noble head so gracefully placed upon its shoulders, all this will some day be the food of loathsome worms. Yet, though the flesh must needs undergo a change, the essence of that beauty, its idea, its artistic conception who can destroy? Does it not exist in the Divine Mind? Perceived and recognized by me, will it not live for ever in my soul, vanquishing old age and even death itself?’

From henceforth Don Luis sees Pepita' daily. He is caught in the toils, but struggles desperately to free himself. She continually comes between himself and his conception of the Supreme Being, as the following passage will show :

‘Fervently I pray Heaven that there should awaken within me the imaginative power capable of creating an image of that conception, that it may absorb and quite efface that of Pepita. The image of the Deity, the goal of all my being, remains vague, obscure, indefinite, lost in darkness, whilst she rises clearly before me, tangible, radiant, and luminous. All other considerations, all other forms are powerless to destroy this vision of her. Between the Crucifix and myself I see Pepita, between the blessed image of the Virgin and myself Pepita ; or between the Holy Book and my eyes as they seek to study it, there comes again Pepita.

‘The fact that I see her every day and for ever hear her praised, even by the *Padre* himself, forces my thoughts in her direction, turns my mind towards profane things, and diverts it from its absorption in things divine. But No ! I do not yet love Pepita ; I will go away and forget her. While I am here I will fight valiantly. I will wrestle with God and prevail with Him by love and submission to His will. My cries shall reach Him like fiery arrows, and shall demolish the shield with which He hides Himself from the eyes of my soul. I will fight as Jacob fought in the silence of night, and God shall wound me in the thigh, and shall utterly overcome me, that conquered though I be, I may rise a conqueror.’

Meanwhile Don Luis had told his father that he would like to learn riding, greatly to Don Pedro's delight, who feels that at last he can teach his son something as well as the Dean. ‘Soon,’ he says, ‘I will make of you the best rider in Andalusia, capable of going to Gibraltar, and, in defiance of the gendarmes, smuggling back a bag of tobacco and a good bale of cotton. Why, you'll soon be fit to mount Babieca himself or Bucephalus, or even the horses of the Sun, that is, if ever they come down here on Earth, and I can catch them by the bridle.’

Don Luis ere long fulfils his proud father's fondest expectations, who then wants to teach him fencing, boxing, and other manly accomplishments, and on his son's observing that when

a missionary he will have small need of such things, Don Pedro maintains that, should arguments fail, it is always well to have in reserve a few sounding blows. Don Pedro has read the old romances, and is quite sure that no missionary's education is complete till he has mastered the noble art of fighting. As Don Luis says in one of the letters:

'He quotes St. Iago, riding his white horse, who, although a very great apostle, is much more given to hewing down Moors than preaching to them; he mentions a certain Señor who was sent on an embassy by the "Catholic Kings" to Boabdil, and who in the Court of the Lions started a theological dispute with the Moors, and, having exhausted his arguments, drew out his sword and charged at them, in order to complete their conversion; lastly he quotes Loyola, who found himself involved in an argument with a Moor on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, till, worn out by the impious and horrible blasphemies of his opponent, he rushed upon him sword in hand, and if the Moor had not taken to his heels, would have brought conviction to his heart in a very thorough-going fashion indeed.'

As time goes on Pepita becomes more and more irresistible. Encouraged by his father, Don Luis goes every evening to the friendly gatherings that take place in Pepita's house, and once there his eyes continually meet hers.

'As I enter,' writes Don Luis, 'Pepita holds out her hand to me, and pressing it I am as one bewitched. A devouring flame feeds upon my heart. . . . Each time that our eyes meet our souls go after them. Thus we reveal to one another a thousand ineffable mysteries of love, and thoughts that by no other means could ever be made known; say to each other poems that no tongue could fitly express; sing to each other songs that no human voice has ever yet sung nor harp accompanied. . . .

'In her presence I love her, her sweetness overpowers me, her gentle yoke subdues me to herself; but when alone I hold her in abhorrence. The recollection of her undoes me. In my dreams I see her severing my head from my body, as Judith slew the captain of the Assyrians, or driving a nail into my temples as Jael did to Sisera; but when at her side I see in her the Spouse of the *Song of Songs*. A voice

within me calls to her, I bless her, and she seems to me as a fountain sealed, a garden enclosed, a flower of the valley, a lily of the fields, my dove and my sister. . . .

‘Every evening I leave her house saying, This shall be the last time, and yet the next one sees me there again. When she speaks and I am near her, my soul hangs upon her lips ; when she smiles, it is as if a ray of light streamed into my heart to gladden it.

‘Take me away from here, I beseech you. Write to my father that he should give me permission to go. If need be, tell him everything. Oh help me ! Come to my rescue !’

From the Dean, however, no rescue comes. Days pass by, during which Luis keeps away from Pepita, till at last he begins to feel that he is triumphing over his passion for her, and that already there is sounding in his ears the song of triumph of the New Jerusalem. The struggle, however, begins to tell on the outer man, and his father, all tenderness and solicitude, urges him to distract his thoughts by appearing at Pepita’s evening receptions as before. ‘Don Pedro, for his part, goes but seldom ; business with his agent is his constant excuse.’ Luis, then, yielding to pressure, goes, and going finds Pepita alone. Their hands meet. Pepita reads her sentence in his eyes, sees that he is bent on renouncing her. She looks ‘sad as the Mother of Sorrows’, two tears force their way from her eyes, and course down her cheeks ; Don Luis, in attempting to dry these tears, finds his lips meeting hers. At this moment Heaven willed that they should hear the step and well-known cough of the Padre in the vestibule, and straightway they fall apart, but not before he had whispered to her : ‘This is the first and must also be the last.’

Again Luis absents himself and by prayer and fasting strives to banish her image from his heart, and prays that Pepita may do likewise. At this point the letters of Don Luis cease, and the story is taken up by the author himself. He tells us how poor Pepita, in great unhappiness, sends for her faithful old friend, the Vicar. The reverend Padre, one of the most lovable characters in the book, is filled with con-

sternation when Pepita, after declaring that various devils have taken up their abode in her heart, confesses that she is frantically in love with Don Luis ; and he is positively horrified when she tells him, with a little smile of triumph amidst her tears, that Don Luis is also in love with her. The story goes on somewhat in this fashion :

“Come,” says the Vicar, seeing her tears, “God’s mercy is infinite, tell me all that has happened.”

“What has happened?” (2) “Why this, that I love him and that he loves me too, and that you, Padre, without knowing it, are much to blame in the matter.”

“Well, truly, this is beyond everything! Tell me, what have I done?”

“In your great kindness you have done nothing but praise Don Luis to me, and I am convinced that you have pronounced still greater eulogies on me to him although far less deserved. What else could you expect to happen? Am I made of bronze? Am I more than twenty years old?”

“Oh, you are right, my child! I am indeed a simpleton, and have greatly contributed to this work of Lucifer.”

‘In speaking, the Padre, who was a good and humble man, looked so contrite and confused that one might have taken him for the culprit and Pepita for the judge. She, however, quick to reproach herself for making thus her dear old friend into an accomplice or indeed the chief delinquent, began to assure him that her love was caused by her own eyes rather than by his words.’

Upon confessing to him the affair of the kiss :

“My daughter, how disgraceful!” groaned the Padre.’

‘Pepita covered her face with both her hands and began to sob like the Magdalen herself. Now her hands were indeed beautiful, more beautiful even than Don Luis had said in his letters. Their whiteness, their transparent smoothness, the delicate, tapering fingers with the pink little nails, smooth as mother-of-pearl, were enough to make a man crazy. In spite of his eighty years the pious Padre understood the reason of Don Luis’s fall from grace. . . .’

“Come, my dear girl,” he said, “Calm yourself. Don’t break my heart. Don Luis is leaving us in two days’ time. Doubtless he has repented, you must repent also ; God would have you for his saints. . . . Earthly love is fleeting ; it leaves behind it a bitter after-taste. How much better it is that your

love, all uncontaminated as it is, should die away, should evaporate, should ascend towards Heaven like the smoke of incense, than that, once satisfied, it should languish away or turn into loathing. Make of the sweet liquid that the cup of love contains a libation, an offering to the Redeemer, and He will give you in exchange the living water that He offered to the Woman of Samaria, the water that never fails, and that gives eternal life.'"

All these, and many other holy words, did the good old man speak to Pepita, until, thoroughly chastened and subdued, Pepita promised to renounce her love, and the Vicar left her, convinced that he had worked a miracle, and just a little proud of what he had accomplished.

While Pepita was thus resolved on sacrifice, it chanced that Don Luis was induced by his cousin Currito to accompany him to the Casino. It was the eve of the festival of St. John, and the place was crowded with the young dandies of the neighbourhood. Amongst others was a certain Count, one of Pepita's many dismissed suitors. This Count, full of bitterness at her rejection of him, happened to be speaking of her in a highly insulting manner when the two cousins entered the Casino. Poor Don Luis found himself in an awkward situation. He was no kinsman of the lady's, and moreover, as a candidate for the priesthood, could not defend her without causing a scandal. He had, therefore, to content himself with preaching a sermon to the Count on the sin of slandering others, got well laughed at for his pains, and returned home swallowing his mortification as best he could. His father's hot blood flowed in his own veins, and he began to think that Don Pedro's theories as to the desirability of the clergy being good pugilists had much to recommend them.

As he was sitting sadly alone in the afternoon of the same day, ruminating over the wrong done to Pepita, there entered the room suddenly, after a manner of her own, Antoñona, Pepita's old nurse, who, with the outspoken frankness characteristic of the Spanish servant of long standing, began to upbraid him for casting a spell over Pepita. This good woman adored her young mistress, and, while serving her as

housekeeper, occupied also the position of friend, confidante, and mentor. Seeing her lady's unhappiness, she made up her mind, and this without consulting Pepita, that Don Luis should be captured, and made to renounce the Church for matrimony. Antoñona told the startled young man that he would certainly be the death of Pepita. 'What can I do?' said he aghast. 'Do,' she answered, 'why, as a saint, the least you can do is to comfort her in her sorrow, and hinder her from making away with herself.' Finally Luis, after a certain amount of ineffectual resistance, is induced to promise that he will call on Pepita in the evening, and the wily Antoñona goes away full of hope.

As for Don Luis, no sooner was he alone than he began to realize the indiscretion he was about to commit in exposing himself once more to temptation. In great disturbance of mind he took a walk into a solitary part of the country to consider the situation. 'Yes, surely,' he said to himself, 'Pepita and I shall find strength to renounce each other's love. We shall live as the holy saints of old, St. Edward the Confessor and his wife Edith, for instance, who, though wedded, lived together as brother and sister. I will be a second Edward, and Pepita an Edith, though, of course, much more beautiful.' So thinking, he reached a stone cross, hard by the ruins of an old monastery, just at the hour of the *Ave Maria*, when the sun was disappearing in glory behind the distant mountains. Don Luis uncovered his head, knelt at the foot of the cross, and prayed with fervour. Night was approaching, a midsummer night of soft moonlight and lustrous stars; nightingales sang, flowers perfumed the air, innumerable glow-worms were shining in the grass. Don Luis felt himself overcome by the soft voluptuousness of so much beauty, and, as he retraced his steps, he thought with misgiving of the interview awaiting him. He would have fain seen the earth open to swallow him up; but, far from this, earth and heaven seemed to smile on him. The stars looked down lovingly, birds sang their amorous songs, the whole universe seemed to Luis to be given over to love, and

his guardian angel seemed far away from him. The Eve of St. John is a night *par excellence* for love-making, and for the observance of various semi-pagan rites and ceremonies. The streets of the village were full of young lovers, and of gipsies with their stalls. Luis threaded his way through the crowd as best he could, and at length reached Pepita's house, though some time after ten o'clock, the hour appointed for the visit.

Antoñona met him with a rough greeting: 'Wretch of a seminarist,' she said, 'I began to think you weren't coming! How dare you be late when the salt of the earth is melting for you, and the sun of beauty is waiting for you?' While saying this, she seized him by the arm, and hurried him across the *patio*, up the stairs, and along the corridors till they reached Pepita's private sitting-room, into which she thrust him, saying: 'Here, my child, is Don Luis, come to say good-bye to you.'

Pepita, whom Antoñona had informed of the impending visit, had been for some time expecting his arrival. She had been weeping, but had removed all traces of tears from her face, and had used her utmost skill in dressing herself to the best advantage. In the excitement of the moment, she had forgotten her promise to the Vicar that she would prepare herself for a life of saintly renunciation; and being at last satisfied with her appearance, she went to a lower room, at one end of which stood, as is still sometimes the case in the country houses of Spain, an altar adorned with flowers, with an image of the Infant Jesus in the centre. Here she knelt, and with the frankness and confidence with which we address one who has long been a guest in our house, she made known to the Holy Child the dearest wish of her heart. The Child Jesus smiled upon her; He was far less awe-inspiring to her than the Christ on the Cross; and she found courage to implore Him that He would give up to her His servant Don Luis. Had He not, indeed, many servants? Could He not well make this small sacrifice to her great need?

And now follows a description of the interview, which was

to decide the destinies of the two lovers, charmingly given, but too long to admit of translation in its entirety. Luis, when seated in the presence of Pepita, was lost in shadow, but the soft light of a lamp shone full on Pepita's fair face, while moonbeams stole through a trellis of roses and jasmine. The rich fragrance of many flowers rose from a little garden below. Silence reigned in the house, broken only by the murmur of a fountain and the distant shouts of the servants, who in celebration of the great festival, were all dancing merrily in a barn.

Don Luis, having greeted Pepita ceremoniously, sat bolt upright at some distance from her, holding his hat and stick, and struggling for words. A long and embarrassing silence was broken by Pepita: 'At last then,' said she, 'you do me the honour of coming to see me, I had altogether ceased to expect you.' Whereupon Luis gave her to understand that he had come to take his last farewell, and that this interview was to be the end of all things. 'The end of all things!' A sword pierced poor Pepita's heart. Was she then condemned to lose at twenty the one man she had ever loved or could love? She was no town-bred beauty, and at such a moment social conventions had small weight with her. Her nature was a simple and passionate one; her soul was on her lips, and she spoke as one who pleaded for something more dearly prized than life itself, and with the idyllic simplicity with which Chloe spoke to Daphnis. Was he indeed right in thus breaking with her, she asked. If he had yielded to the simple charms of an ignorant country girl like herself, what would he feel when in great cities noble ladies brought the full battery of their fascinations to bear on him? Was a man who had proved himself so susceptible fitted to take the solemn vows of a priest? Surely those who give themselves to God's service should be of stronger mould than he. But if, on the other hand, this were no passing fancy of his, but love itself, and if he had known how to inspire in a rustic girl a feeling as strong as his own, would he now abandon her to her despair? Let him remember that she is wholly without

the strength and wisdom that come from high studies like his own, nor has she the consolations of a great future, such as a sublime being like himself might look for. No, all that remains to one so simple is to die of grief. Will he begin this great career of his by slaying one who loves him well?

To this Luis gave answer, and the conversation continued somewhat as follows:

‘Such talk is mere sophistry. Do not imagine, seminarist though I be, that I have never been stirred ere this by thoughts of love. Glorious visions of fair ladies have many times floated before my imagination, with charms infinitely more seductive than the fine ladies of real life. Yet I have known how to withstand all such allurements, though not, it is true, the far greater charms that you yourself possess.’

She. ‘What, am I then, like them, a mere vision, an abstraction? Do you not love me for myself?’

He. ‘Yes, Pepita, my conception of you is truly you yourself; and yet it is as if it had been part of my own soul from the time of its first creation, and like the perfume of flowers, the purest and most delicate part of its essence.’

She. ‘Ah, that is what I feared, and now you confess it yourself, you do not love *me*. What you love is the essence, the aroma, the purest part of your own soul, which has taken an outward form like mine.’

He. ‘No, Pepita, it is indeed you whom I love, although it is true that before we ever met the magic charm of a woman’s love had penetrated my imagination; and visions of Lauras, Juliets, and Margarets hovered round me. But I turned away from them to fix my eyes on Christ, striving that He alone should live in me, and I in Him. Then it was that God brought me face to face with you, you, who at once caused all my visions of nymphs, queens, and goddesses to fade away. It seemed, indeed, that something supernatural drew me to you. Not only did I love you from the moment I saw you, but almost before I saw you, as though drawn to you by Fate, by the power of things predestined.’

She. ‘And if Fate it be, why not submit to it? I, too, loved you, Don Luis, almost before I had seen you, if it is love to die to oneself and to live wholly in another. I have prayed to God to cure me of this love, and He has not deigned to listen to me; I have prayed to the Blessed Virgin, and my prayer has been unanswered; to my patron saint, and he has

not succoured me. Finally I have had the hardihood to beseech God to permit you to love me, and for my sake to renounce the career of priest. Tell me, has Heaven been deaf to this petition ?'

He. 'Pepita, truly the love I bear you is immense, but think of all the hopes, the aspirations of my life, close upon realization ! Would you have me leave the Creator for the creature ? Why will you not rise with me to those high regions in which I seek to dwell ? God, with the purest fire of His Spirit penetrates the souls of saints, and fills them with Himself. They become all fire and light like metal fresh from the furnace. Let us climb together the steep and mystic ladder that leads to heaven. But to do this we must of necessity be separate in the flesh, and I must go whither the Voice of the Most High is calling me.'

She. 'Ah, Señor Don Luis, I am of other metal than yourself ; I am weak and sinful, too low of mind to rise to these spiritual heights. I cannot even think of you without your outer form. Your lips, your eyes, your dark hair, your words, which take my ears captive, all your bodily self, in fact, fills me with love, and through it, and not divided from it, is revealed to me the vague and mysterious spiritual part of you. It is you I love—your soul, your body, your very shadow, your mirrored reflection, your name, your voice, your walk, all that makes up Don Luis de Vargas ; therefore, slay me as an idolatress, for not otherwise can a poor creature like me ever love you.'

And speaking thus, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, Pepita rose, and hastily left the room. Don Luis, carried away by tenderness and pity, impetuously hastened after her ; but too late—she had already disappeared into an inner apartment. Don Luis returned to the boudoir. Horror and remorse were depicted on his face, and one might have taken him for Judas himself. He flung himself down on to a chair, resting his elbows on his knees, and his face on both his hands, and long remained motionless, looking for all the world as though he had just been murdering Pepita.

At last Pepita returned, and, with a sad face and downcast eyes, stood before Luis, as before a judge. She told him that she repented of her conduct to him, and that her heart was full of iniquity. She alone was the guilty one, she alone was

responsible for his moment of delirium. She, who had caused the Star of the Morning to fall, would no longer hold him from his place in heaven, and, sinking on her knees before him, she implored him to leave her.

What happened next? What else than that Luis lifted up Pepita, caressed her fair curls, and covered her face with kisses, calling her, in the poetic Spanish fashion, 'life of his soul, treasure of his heart, and light of his eyes'? He was the sinner, he declared, the make-believe saint, who had mistaken his vocation, and dreamed in his folly of missions and miracles!

Some time later, and with various preliminary coughs, Antoñona opened the door, saying: 'This is a very long discourse. This sermon has not been that of the Seven Words, but almost that of the Forty Hours. It is time for you to go, Don Luis.'

Don Luis, alone in the street, is radiantly happy of course, but sees certain breakers ahead. What will the Dean, what will the Bishop say? What, too, his father, Pepita's elderly suitor? As for his renunciation of the priestly life, clearly he was unfitted for it, and all his high hopes were mere boyish fancies. As they could not be saints, at least they would live as Philemon and Baucis, an example of conjugal love till death parted them, and heaven received them. First, however, before playing the rôle of Philemon, he must settle his score with the Count, for, much as he hated all violence, it behoved him for Pepita's sake to rap him on the head.

A duel follows, and Luis by the merest luck lays his opponent low. Though the wound he gave him was in reality slight, Luis believed that he had slain him, and the following passage shows the tumult of his mind.

'The anguish of Don Luis was extreme. He, who had believed himself incapable of killing a sparrow, had slain a man! He, who a few hours ago was hoping to be a priest, a missionary, and preacher of the Gospel, had committed all possible crimes, broken all the commandments of God! There was no mortal sin with which he was not contaminated, and the Devil had upset all his plans. How could he even

be a Philemon, since it was no good beginning of an idyllic life to go and break his neighbour's head with a sword?'

The end soon follows. The fever which attacks Don Luis after his agitating midsummer-night is soon cured, and the Count recovers of his hurt. Don Luis makes full confession to his father, who embraces him tenderly, telling him that he had long since guessed his secret, and that to see his son Pepita's husband was the dearest wish of his heart. The wedding was a very festive one, and at the dance that followed it Don Pedro led out all the pretty girls, as well as the robust aunt, Doña Casilda, herself.

NOTES ON JUAN VALERA

(1) *Jamugas*. An old-fashioned Spanish saddle for ladies.

(2) *What has happened*. I have in several passages slightly reduced the original for the sake of brevity. I have more especially done this in the interview between the Padre and Pepita, and in that which follows between the two lovers; where omissions have to be bridged over I have at times substituted my own words for those of the original, but have sought to reproduce in them the general effect of the book.

RAMÓN DE CAMPOAMOR

(1817-1901)

Campoamor is one whose work is singularly unequal; his everyday level verges on the commonplace, and there is something of the *bourgeois* in his outlook on life. It is, however, at his highest that a man should be judged, and, if not among the world's great poets, Campoamor has at his best a very special charm of his own, and has given us lyrics full of tenderness and delicate humour.

Though born and bred in the province of Asturias, Ramón de Campoamor had the temperament of the South; he delighted in the warmth and colour of Valencia, Murcia, and Alicante, in which latter place he made a marriage that was

of the happiest. It was in Madrid that he chiefly lived, dividing his time between poetry, politics, and philosophy.

Only nine years younger than Espronceda, Campoamor grew up in the atmosphere of romanticism, but was adroit enough to realize, early in life, that he could not rival his contemporary, Zorrilla, in his special province—the sonorous and the rhythmic. In the *Doloras*, therefore, a volume published in 1846, he sought and found fame by poems which, if not the entirely new *genre* he claimed them to be, were, at any rate, new in name and intention.

To beauty of diction, to the music and flow of the verse (all-important to the Romantic School) he affected indifference, the thought it contained being sufficient, as he asserted, to give a composition life and abiding value. Fortunately, however, as with our own far greater poet Wordsworth, the instinct of genius led him in his happiest moments to drop the balder, tamer language of everyday life, and, clothing his idea harmoniously, he then produced real masterpieces.

The *Dolora* is a small poem, 'a cup, containing sweetness and bitterness', or, according to the poet's own definition, 'a composition in which lightness is united to sentiment, and brevity to profundity'. Other volumes followed—the *Pequeños poemas* of the seventies, and the *Humoradas* of some ten years later. These and all his poems are characterized in a greater or less degree by a delicate analysis of women, pathos, philosophy, wit, and gaiety, mingled with *fin de siècle* disillusionment and weariness. None of Campoamor's lyrics is more justly celebrated than that translated below. In the peasant girl, who begs her priest to write a letter for her to her lover, there is created a dramatic situation of an original kind, and there is a fine character-contrast between the sympathetic, wise old man, and the impassioned child of the South, all 'spirit, fire, and dew', while the inimitable grace of its form defies translation.

The piquant contrast between an elder man's ripe experience and a young girl's freshness occurs in other of his poems, as in the beautiful *El Beso*, the kiss that thrills from Canton to

Cadiz, or in *Lo que hace el tiempo* (what time brings), where, in a series of lovely verses, the poet discourses on destiny and the mutability of love. *El Gaitero de Gijón* is of a popularity second only to *Quién supiera*. Its metre is delicately beautiful, and its pathos of the simple, heart-rending kind, that of a fiddler at the village dance earning bread for the family, while mourning the mother he has just laid to rest. Another striking poem is *El tren expreso*, a story of love in a train; and surely nowhere in modern verse is the poetry of rushing movement through the darkness of night, and the solemn loveliness of early dawn, more finely rendered.

From the middle of the nineteenth century Núñez de Arce and Campoamor were the two Spanish poets highest in the public estimation. There is a wide difference between the strenuous, high-souled, melancholy Castilian and the gay, sceptical, philosophic Campoamor, a man full of joyous elasticity of spirit, who found, as he declared, that the secret of life consists in being born again with each recurring day. The versatility and wide culture of the last-named make him a great and imposing literary figure. Then, too, he maintained his hold over his contemporaries by being their mouth-piece. He expressed the disenchantment of an age of reaction, and at the same time cheered by his buoyant wit. As the 'poet of thought' he, moreover, gave his readers ideas which, if not singularly profound, stirred and interested. Campoamor, in fact, who was as much perhaps a man of the world as a poet, owed his high position in literature partly to qualities outside the realm of poetry proper.

QUIÉN SUPIERA ESCRIBIR!¹

(*If only I could write!*)

'I pray you, reverend Sir, this letter write.'

'To whom then? Ah, I know.'

'You know, because that dark and starless night

You saw us meet?' 'E'en so.'

¹ For original see *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 333.

‘O Sir, forgive us.’ ‘Nay, ’twas no great sin,
 The hour to love did lend;
 Give me a pen and paper, I’ll begin:
Raymond, beloved friend!

‘Belovéd? Well, ’tis written. You’re not vext?
 Do you approve it?’ ‘Yes.’
I am so sad alone. (‘Should that come next?’)
More sad than you can guess.

Such sorrow fills me since we two did part!
 ‘How do you know my pain?’

‘To these old eyes is every young maid’s heart
 Like crystal. free from stain.’

What without you is life? A vale of woe.
With you? The promised land.

‘Ah, Señor Cura! Make your writing so
 That he may understand.’

The kiss I gave you when you left me, sweet—
 ‘What! Know you of my kiss?’

‘Ever when lovers part, and when they meet—
 Oh, take it not amiss.’

Oh, if your love should never bring you more,
How should I grieve and sigh!

‘What grieve, and nothing more? Nay, good Señor,
 Say, I were like to die.’

‘To die! My child, such word were blasphemy.’
 ‘Yet die full well I might.’

‘I’ll not put “die”.’ ‘Your heart is ice. Ah me!
 If only I could write!’

II

‘Ah, Señor Cura, ’tis in vain you seek
 My sorrow thus to still;
 Unless, indeed, to make my whole heart speak
 These pen-strokes have the skill.

For God’s sake write, my soul would fain be free
 From all its weary grief,
 Which day by day would even stifle me,
 But that tears bring relief.

Tell him these rosy lips he loved, that met
 His own dear lips erewhile,
 Are now for ever closed, and fast forget
 Even what 'tis to smile.

Tell him, these eyes, that won from him such praise,
 Are drooping and dejected,
 Even because therein his well-loved face
 No longer is reflected.

Tell him, of all the torments life can bring,
 Be absence my last choice ;
 Tell him, that ever in my ears will ring
 The echo of his voice.

Yet say, that since for him so sad I stay,
 I count my sorrow light,
 O God, how many are the things I'd say,
 If I could only write !

END.

Now, Sir, 'tis done. I trace these words for end :
 " To Raymond ", and bestow
 Upon it this my mark, the which to send,
 Small Latin need I know.'

GASPAR NÚÑEZ DE ARCE

(1834-1903)

Spain is a large country, and has regions widely different from one another. There is the rich fertility of Galicia, the oriental brilliancy of colouring of Valencia and Murcia, the soft luxuriance of Andalusia ; but it is Castile and the Castilians that best represent the Peninsula as a whole, Castile with its rugged grandeur and sober hues, and its people with their stately dignity and strength of character. Núñez de Arce, the greatest Spanish poet of the nineteenth century in its second half, was a Castilian of the finest type. Born in

Valladolid, and reared in Toledo, of all ancient cities the most Spanish, he early found his way to Madrid, and made his mark as a dramatist by producing in *El Haz de Leña* what Professor Fitzmaurice-Kelly considers the best historical play of the nineteenth century. He then, as journalist, turned his thoughts to politics, becoming later a *diputado* and minister. He took part in Isabel the Second's dethronement, drew up the Liberal party's manifesto in its justification, and supported Prim, the one really great statesman of a troublous time. At the accession of Alfonso XII he was his steady champion, till the day—the happiest of his life, as he called it—when he turned his back definitely on politics and party strife. During these his most strenuous years Spain was in a state of chaotic disorder, and Núñez de Arce, as an honourable gentleman of high ideals, lived ill at ease in a venal and corrupt society. Like Quintana, the poet of a more heroic age, whom he followed and in some ways resembled, he took his art with all seriousness, and used it to raise and purify the world to which he belonged. In his *Gritos del Combate* of 1875, poems that form a splendidly powerful denunciation of blind revolutionary fury, he published what Menéndez y Pelayo mentions as 'the chief monument of his fame'. Other poems followed, different in theme, less vigorous, but, as some would hold, of an even riper perfection. In his latter years he produced little, and lived to see the rise of a school of poetry in which he had no part. The patriot, who with manly energy had upheld his country's courage in dark hours, showed, as he grew older, the other side of his nature, that of the weary pessimist. Ill health was, it seems, mainly accountable for this, and one is glad to know that before death he regained much of the serene cheerfulness so admirable in his contemporary, Giner de los Rios.

Apart from physical delicacy Núñez de Arce enjoyed a life of singular happiness and prosperity. Few poets have been more revered, or have seen in their lifetime more numerous editions of their works.

Núñez de Arce's individual poems need not be here enume-

rated, as full accounts of them may be found elsewhere. Those who know *Un Idilio*, a story as beautiful and pathetic as that of Mistral's *Mirtio*, with a noble background in the poet's native Castile, will, I think, feel with me that it must be read in its entirety to be appreciated. The verses that I have translated from the *Última lamentación de Lord Byron* are complete in themselves, and are certainly among the poet's finest passages. Byron, who in the poem stands for Núñez's ideal champion of liberty, is sailing towards the shores of Greece, and as he sails reviews its past and that of other nations that have felt the yoke of tyrants. The poem is written in octaves that are among the finest in Spanish verse.

I have chosen the poem *Tristezas*, of which I have translated the main part, not only for its great intrinsic beauty (and it is by general consent a masterpiece), but also because it gives us a characteristic side of Núñez's dual nature. He has been called 'the poet of doubt', and he shows himself here hovering between hope and fear. The finest part of the ode is perhaps the exquisite description of his worship as a child in the cathedral, which can be no other than that of Toledo. As only genius can, he paints the rapture of childlike faith, the dull despair of life without an anchor, the yearning for the Voice to waken dry bones into life. In the *Tristezas*, as in the *Satire to Darwin*, the poet's attitude towards science is that of the conservative Roman Catholic. That his general feeling was one of faith he himself tells us in the following passage, taken from a lecture delivered by him in Madrid :

'I believe in the Spirit of Good, which with white brow, crowned with rays of light, will one day come down to heal the wounds of our souls, and to disperse the darkness of earth ; I believe in the flowers of hope, which spring up from the grave ; . . . I believe in the upward flight of the soul, which knows no rest ; I believe in the free will of men and of nations ; I believe finally in God.'

Núñez de Arce was in the habit of reading his poems in Madrid to a crowd of listeners, and it has been remarked that this led him to sacrifice a little too much to the roundness

of the strophe and to rhythmical effect. He ranks, however, as one of the very great lyric poets of Spain, as an artist in whom an exquisite sense of style, Hellenic self-restraint, gravity, and sincerity are distinguishing characteristics. Though a Southerner in underlying passion, he had a distinct preference for sombre hues and quiet effects. A master of versification, he shows a special preference for the sextet. His triplets, a form which he revived in the fine poem *Raimundo Lulio*, are of a beauty unrivalled in Spanish literature.

ON LICENSE

From *Estrofas*¹ (1870), Stanzas xviii, xix, and xx.

Liberty, liberty ! Alas ! Thou art not she,
That Virgin chaste, in robe of shining white,
Whom whilom in my dreams I thought to see.
In naught resembleth thee that goddess bright,
Who, like the Morning Star in purity,
Sheds on earth's gloomy haunts her radiant light.

Thou art no fountain of perennial fame,
Stirring the heart with hopes sublime and grand,
And giving life true dignity and aim ;
Nor heavenly spirit with avenging hand,
Sent down from heaven the tyrant's neck to brand
For evermore with crimson mark of shame.

Thou 'rt not that vision, that long-coveted prize,
I vainly follow with my soul athirst ;
But what wild words are these ? Away disguise,
Dishevelled license, of all fiends the worst,
Sedition's paramour, with staring eyes
I mark thee well. Be thou for aye accurst.

¹ For original see *Las cien mejores poesías*, p. 319.

TRISTEZAS ¹

From the *Gritos del Combate* (1874)

Dejection

When'er my mind the dawn of life recalls,
How once within the walls
Of our cathedrals, lost in prayer, I knelt,
And, kneeling, saw the blessed Rood before me,
While God's own peace came o'er me,
And dreams of Paradise within me dwelt ;

My heavy brow I beat, and all afire
With feverish desire
Would seek the vanished bliss of childhood tender ;
To hold once more that faith without alloy
Alas, with what great joy
This weary length of life I would surrender !

Ah me ! The ardent love I mind me now,
Wherewith I bent my brow
E'en to the flagstones of the holy shrine,
Steeping, the while I prayed, my fantasy
In light and poetry,
Mingled with reverent awe for things divine.

The soaring arches, that to heaven raised
My spirit as I gazed,
Their majesty serene, sublime, and grave,
The slow and cadenced psalm, that, mounting high,
Seeming half groan, half sigh,
Reverberated in the spacious nave ;

The splendour dimly seen in twilight gloom
Of many an ancient tomb,
Whose art austere the infinite proclaims,
The light that set the painted windows glowing,
Which, soft reflections throwing,
Lit up gray columns with their coloured flames ;

¹ For original see *Las cien mejores poesías*, p. 322.

Those clustered shafts, from whence in graceful flight
 To build the arch aright,
 United yet apart, each branch ascends,
 As when the multitude in prayer is found,
 And from one wave of sound
 Each heart distinct its own petition sends ;

The Gothic altar with the Cross above,
 Whereon in wondrous love
 Hangs the Redeemer—Christ the Crucified,
 Wrestling in agony, with failing breath,
 'Gainst sin, our foe, and Death,
 His arms to all that sorrow opening wide ;

And the wild clamour of the pealing bell,
 That to the soul would tell
 Its heavenly story from the belfry-tower,
 While strange, sweet promises appear to float
 Around each wingéd note
 To all who sigh in dark and lonely hour ;

These bore me upwards into regions fair,
 Where in serener air
 Religion fed my soul with rapture mute,
 All, all, that in the sanctuary I saw,
 Made me with holy awe
 To tremble like the strings of harp or lute.

Led by that voice that he alone can hear
 Who with a holy fear
 And fervent faith and love is all aflame,
 Arrayed in floating garments, dazzling white,
 Up to the zenith's height
 My infant prayer like some pure virgin came.

.

O breath that givest life to all our being !
 O glory past our seeing !
 O thirst unquenchable, divine and pure !
 O heaven, whose azure vault in days of old
 Meseemed o'erlaid with gold,
 But now hangs shrouded, gloomy, and obscure !

My inner heart Thou dost no longer chasten,
No longer do I hasten
As once in childhood to Thy holy altar ;
Alas ! to reach Thee I have lost the way,
And, miserably astray,
Ever in darkness and despair I falter.

Onward I go 'mid bitter tears and sighs,
I call, no voice replies,
Distractedly I cast mine eyes around,
Yet may not pierce the gloom, so, reft of hope,
Full timorously I grope
Along a weary path where thorns abound.

Child of the age, I strive, O Christ, in vain
Against its impious reign ;
Its demoniac greatness lays me low ;
An age it is of wonders and of fears,
That amid ruin rears
Its god of dull dejection, doubt, and woe.

Not such art Thou, for with Thy gracious face
Vain terrors dost Thou chase ;
Thou to the wanderer art light and guide ;
But this one is a god from the Unknown,
Chaos his only throne,
His law supreme, blind chance and naught beside.

. . .

A helmless, broken vessel is this Age !
Round it the billows rage,
The lightning burns, the furious tempests beat,
As, drifting on a wide and heaving sea,
In its immensity
It flames resplendent 'mid devouring heat.

Ah me ! The mystic shore so distant seems,
And wondrously it gleams,
As the great Sun sinks sadly in the West ;
The vessel burns, above the storm-winds pass,
Too late, too late, alas,
To reach the far-off haven of our rest !

What then is Science when our faith is cold ?
 A war-horse none may hold,
 That, by delirium seized, outstrips the wind,
 Till, plunging into thick and tangled brakes,
 His random course he takes,
 And struggling ever, still no goal may find.

Save us, O Christ, who once for men didst bleed,
 Oh, save us in our need !
 Haply less guilty than infirm our race ;
 O'erwhelmed by very pride, a heavy weight,
 We rush upon our fate,
 Saviour, if yet Thou livest, grant us grace.

When science rashly from Thy way departs,
 It plants within our hearts
 Full many an evil germ of hidden powers ;
 E'en as the insect, when it takes its flight,
 Leaves, like a poisonous blight,
 Its larva in the calyx of the flowers.

If in this dreary maze, profound and dark,
 Dwell yet the enkindling spark,
 Source of all life and hope—Thy holy Word,
 Speak to our faith long dead, and cry aloud :
 ' Awake, put off thy shroud,'
 E'en as when Lazarus Thy summons heard.

The following verses refer to the religious and civil oppression under which Spain and Italy groaned at the time of the establishment of the so-called ' Holy Alliance '.

ÚLTIMA LAMENTACIÓN DE LORD BYRON¹ (1879)

VERSE XX

In the great name of God heroic Spain,
 Who first awoke the world from heavy sleep,
 In guerdon of her high emprise doth gain
 Torture most vile and anguish long and deep.
 In impotence beneath her tyrants' reign
 Unhappy Italy enslaved must weep,
 And groans the while that alien banditti
 Divide between them vineyard, plain, and city.

¹ Edit. Madrid.

XXI

In God's great name, as once to beasts of prey,
 Into the prison's open jaws are thrown
 Ill-fated men, hearing from day to day
 But the chain's clank, sole answer to each groan.
 In God's name into exile go their way
 Both old and young, and their sad lot bemoan ;
 And in the name of God the cruel knife
 Of those too proud to fawn cuts short the life.

XXII

All in God's name ! Thus impious ones blaspheme ;
 Yet to my father's God I dare maintain,
 More pleasing would the holy incense seem
 Than all the reeking blood of victims slain !
 And He, the great Atoner, to redeem,
 And stablish in this world His peaceful reign,
 Holds out His loving arms, holds out to bless ;
 Fain would He clasp poor sinners, not oppress.

XXIII

They have wronged Thee, O my God ! Thou hearst the cry,
 Wrung from the stricken heart, and Thou dost see
 With pitying eyes our grief, nor wouldst deny
 To man, Thy son, his sacred liberty.
 Truly they have wronged Thee ; if to thirst and sigh
 To reach beyond the Veil a sin should be,
 If reason evil be and not divine,
 Count it not sin in me—the gift is Thine.

The fate of the unhappy women of Suli is a tragic episode in modern Greek history. Suli was a colony of Greeks, who, before the emancipation of Greece, fleeing from the Turks, established themselves in Epirus amidst the mountains. These unhappy men of Suli were later all put to death by the Turkish governor. Monsieur Villemain, in his *Etudes de l'histoire moderne*, thus describes the event, to which the following stanzas refer: 'Hardly had the fugitive Suliotes occupied the heights of Zulongos when they saw 4,000 Turks approaching with a great store of artillery. A furious fight began, which exhausted the ammunition of the Suliotes. On

the next day the Turks returned to fight against their almost defenceless enemies. . . . Some sixty women, with their children in their arms, watched from the top of a steep rock the death-struggle of their husbands and brothers. Seized with despair when they saw that all was over, they hurled their children into the abyss below, and then, joining hands, began to move, as in some solemn dance, at the brink of the precipice. As thus they moved, one woman after the other let herself fall headlong, the circle dwindling until all had perished.'

ÚLTIMA LAMENTACIÓN DE LORD BYRON

LXII

So, prizing her good fame above her life,
And seeing from afar her loved ones die,
Full many a noble mother, maid, and wife
Proved to the stars her race's courage high.
Following with anxious glance the deadly strife,
And gazing down in speechless agony
And vain desire to avenge, each hapless daughter
Saw her dear kinsmen fall in fearful slaughter.

LXVIII

'Alas, 'tis finished!' Thus the wild lament,
Which Echo loudly voiced from peak to peak,
Wherein at that last hour there found a vent
The grief of all the band. Naught else they speak,
Transfixed with horror, and with head down bent;
Till, by their woe made desperate, they seek
(Rather than living, bear yet heavier doom
In vile harem) the silence of the tomb.

LXIX

In frenzy wild, as following some strange call,
E'en to the gully's brink, led by the sound
Of raging cataract, came they one and all.
And there beneath them lay in peace profound
Their Mother Earth, while darkness like a pall
'Gan to envelop her and wrap her round;
The heavens were calm, Ocean and wind asleep,
Alone the tortured soul must watch and weep.

L

LXX

A wail is heard—‘Ah me, ah woe is me!’
Cried a young mother, pressing, with passionate kiss,
Close to her breast her boy. ‘I promise thee
Thou shalt be free, my son,’ and, saying this,
Flung down her child, sight pitiful to see,
Down to the bottom of the cruel abyss.
He, falling headlong, gave one cry supreme
That like a mingled groan and curse did seem.

LXXI

Led on by grief, with eyes that wildly stare
And face distorted, madness like a snake
Coiled round the heaving breast; with their dark hair
Dishevelled and on end, their leave they take
Of life and joy, and, sunk in black despair,
The hope that gave them being they forsake;
While from the chasm’s edge, with labouring breath,
They fling their children down to yawning death.

LXXII

When consummated their hard sacrifice
In solemn circle all together stand,
And at the border of the precipice
Move in slow rhythm, joining hand to hand.
The gaping gulf each victim doth entice
As by their frenzy driven moved the band;
And from the Dance of Death went forth alone
One after other as he claimed his own.

VICENTE BLASCO IBÁÑEZ

(b. 1867)

Señor Ibáñez, among living Spanish novelists one of the best known, is a follower of Zola and the chief representative of naturalism in Spain. One is drawn nearer to him, personally, by the warm sympathy he has felt with France, our ally, in her struggle against the Powers of Darkness. In his recent novel, *The Four Riders of the Apocalypse*, he describes the battle of the Marne. He sees in France the leader of the Latin races, and represents her victoriously asserting herself against the barbarous descendants of Rome's invaders.

His greatest novels are his 'regional' ones, in which the scene lies in his native province of Valencia; and he has given us with his pen its atmosphere, and the lives and customs of its people, no less vividly than the canvases of the distinguished painter Señor Sorolla bring before our eyes its gorgeous colouring and vegetation.

Señor Ibáñez is accused of being too frequently ungrammatical and faulty in the construction of his sentences. Like others of his school, he bores one at times with the excessive and minute descriptions of outward objects, repels one also with much that is coarse and nauseous; and is without the sense of humour that keeps things in their true proportion. Admitting, however, these blemishes in his style, Señor Ibáñez has done fine work, and his best novels are real achievements and extremely powerful. He is a realist, but his realism is tinged with idealism in the characteristic Spanish manner. He has hours of high imagination, when he is deeply sensible of the beauty that exists in ordinary human life in close juxtaposition to its ugliness; and this, as well as the perennial loveliness of Nature, he has a poet's power of rendering.

It was Galdós who first among the novelists of Spain

evinced a deep sympathy for the toilers who live under the crushing weight of a hopeless poverty. Señor Ibáñez's pity for the unfortunate is no less intense. 'Bread, bread,' cries one of them in *La Barraca*, 'at what a cost is it gained, and how much wickedness does the struggle for it produce in us.' It is this struggle that the novelist has made his chief theme and lifelong study.

Señor Ibáñez's first novel, *Arroz y Tartana*, appeared in 1894, since when others have steadily followed. Many would consider *La Barraca* (1898) his finest, certainly his most poetic and finished one, while others may prefer his very powerful *Entre Naranjos* (1900), where the scene lies in the warm and enervating atmosphere of the Valencian fields in spring. *La Bodega* (1905), from which I have translated the following passage, is one of four novels written with a special purpose, and is far inferior as a whole to the two mentioned above. Nevertheless, the extract itself is illustrative of its author in one of his higher moments. It has, moreover, a peculiarly Spanish flavour, and treats very beautifully of the great mystery of death that the last tragic years have brought so near to us.

The story shows us the seamy side of Spanish life—the degraded condition of the working classes in the wine-growing country of the south. Salvatierra, a leading character in the book, is an idealist, a rebel against the established order of things, and, as such, has led a life of persecution and imprisonment. Though loving and gentle by nature, he preaches the doctrine of 'écrasez l'infâme', and has set himself against a religion which, as he sees it, teaches resignation to the monstrous and the infamous. Some time before the scene translated he had lost in his mother the being he loved best on earth, and his vehement scepticism wavers when confronted by the grave. His large heart goes out in sympathy towards Alcaparrón, a young gipsy, mourning his kinswoman, Marie-Cruz. As will be seen, her poor little body, wasted by consumption, is laid in a cart, and the funeral procession takes place at night.

ON DEATH AND THE HEREAFTER

From *La Bodega*.

Close behind the cart trudged the old woman and her children, while, following her, came Alcaparrón with Salvatierra, who was wishing to accompany these poor people to the town. At the gateway of their quarters, with the little outside lamp casting its feeble glimmer on them, stood the day-labourers; all were absorbed in listening to the creaking of the cart, scarce visible in the darkness, and to the wails of the gipsies, sounds which alone disturbed the peace of the country, as it lay a blue inert mass beneath the cold light of the stars.

Alcaparrón walked with a certain feeling of pride beside the man whose name was on everybody's lips. They were now on the high road, and above its white burden rose the outline of the cart, while, as it went on its way, could be heard in the quiet night the jingling of its horses' bells and the groans of those who followed in its wake. The gipsy heaved slow sighs that were an echo of the loud laments of those preceding him, and at the same time talked to Salvatierra of the dead girl he loved:

'She was the flower of the flock, Señor, that's why she left us, for the good ones are always taken early. . . . I did so love her, I did, and all I ever tried to earn was just that she should share it, or rather have it all. She was so good to me, the sweet little dove, the pretty little April rose, why she looked after me just like the Virgin herself! Whenever I was in some scrape or other, and Mother was put out with me, there was Marie-Cruz taking the part of her poor José-Maria! O, my sweet cousin, my pure little saint, my dark beauty with those great eyes that shone like bonfires, what wouldn't your poor gipsy have done for you! . . . Listen, your Mercy! I have had sweethearts by the dozen, for I am fond of girls, and once was nigh upon marrying one of 'em, but I love Marie-Cruz as I love no other woman, though I can't mayhap make it plain to you, Sir, who know so much. Why I love that poor little thing, lying yonder, as our priest loves the Mother of God when he says mass to her. What a pleasure it was to look into her eyes and listen to her pure voice! But as for touching so much as the hem of her skirt, why I never even thought of it! She was my little Virgin-Mary, like the

ones in the churches. Her face was all I ever dared to look at, her pretty face made by the angels themselves.'

Absorbed thus in thoughts of the dead girl, the gipsy sighed anew, and there answered him a chorus of laments from those who were following the cart: 'Oh, oh! My darling is dead, my shining sun, my own sweet love!' This from the mother, and the children responded to her by loud howls of grief, as if bent on proclaiming to the dark earth, to the deep blue vault of heaven, and to the stars of dazzling brilliancy, that they had indeed lost their cousin, the sweet Marie-Cruz.

Salvatierra felt himself carried away by this tragic and violent sorrow, which rose into the murky air and rent the silence of the fields. Meanwhile Alcaparrón ceased to groan. 'Tell me, your Mercy, you who are so wise, will there ever come a time when I shall see my cousin again?'

The anguish of uncertainty impelled him to the question, and, staying his steps, he looked appealingly at Salvatierra, his oriental eyes shining in the dim light with strange opalescent reflections.

The rebel was deeply moved by this simple soul, who in his sore affliction thus implored him for one drop of comfort. 'Yes, you will see her again,' he solemnly asserted. 'Moreover, at all times you will be in contact with something that will have made part of her being. All that has ever been exists still in the world, changing only its form, so that no atom is ever lost. We live surrounded by what is past, and what is yet to come. The remains of those we have loved and the component parts of those who in their turn will love us float around us and maintain our life.'

Salvatierra, beneath the pressure of his own thoughts, and confronted by the mystery of death, felt the necessity of disburdening himself to some one, and of speaking openly to this poor, simple fellow of his own weakness and vacillation of spirit. Well knowing that he could not be understood, an irresistible longing, nevertheless, urged him to lay bare his soul; even so, great Shakespearian characters, kings in disgrace, chieftains pursued by Fate, in brotherly fashion make confidants of jesters and fools. Grief seemed suddenly to have lent a kind of greatness to the despised gipsy, and thus it was that Salvatierra found himself speaking to him as to a brother. The rebel had also known suffering, and had been crushed by it; yet this he could hardly regret, seeing that his very weakness had brought him much sweet consolation. It is true that men wondered at the strength of his nature, at the

stoicism with which he bore persecution and physical suffering. This, however, was only while struggling against human beings; with death facing him, death, invincible, cruel, and inevitable, all his strength seemed suddenly to melt away. Salvatierra then, as though half oblivious of the presence of the gipsy, and as one speaking to himself, recalled his recent journey to Cadiz to see a little plot of ground, hard by a mud wall, and surrounded by crosses and gravestones. 'And was this all', said he, 'that remained of the being that has filled my every thought, all that remained of my old mother, who was ever gentle and good as the blessed women of Holy Writ? Only that little square of newly-opened ground and the daisies bordering it? Have I for ever lost the soft light of her eyes, the echo of her voice, which, cracked though it were by age, was of such caressing sweetness? Alcaparrón, you cannot understand me,' continued Salvatierra, with faltering voice. 'Perhaps it is well for you that you are simple of nature, and that in grief as in joy you are light and changeable as a bird. But listen, even if you cannot follow me. I don't wish to deny what I have learnt, nor to doubt what I know. I have told myself that the life beyond the grave is a lie, the vain illusion of human selfishness; a lie also is the paradise of all the many creeds, and their eternal life, their resurrection of the body, their future pleasures and penalties weary and sicken me. We have ever affirmed that there is no life but the present one, and yet before the earth that hides my mother away from me I felt, for the first time, all my convictions shaken. Death ends our being, and yet a portion of us remains united to those which shall come after us, something vague and intangible, bearing the stamp of our personality. See here, Alcaparrón, we are like the fish in the sea. The fish live in the same water in which were dissolved their progenitors, and in which lie the germs of those to come. Well, we also live surrounded by those of the past and of the future; and I, my friend, when tears break forth, as I think of the nothingness of that plot of ground, and of the flowers that border it, tell myself that my mother is not wholly there. There has escaped from it a something which pervades my life, drawn to me by a mysterious sympathy, accompanying me on my way, and encircling me in an embrace sweet as a lover's kiss. At times an inner voice tells me all this is false, but I will not heed it; I *must* have my dreams, my sweet, deceiving fancies, to bring me consolation. Perhaps in this light breeze, which plays upon our faces, there is something

of those dear, tremulous hands that caressed me for the last time before I went to prison.'

The gipsy had ceased his groans, and was gazing on Salvatierra, his African eyes large with wonder. He did not understand the greater part of the words, yet dimly discerned in them a hope.

'Well, then, your Mercy thinks that Marie-Cruz is not quite dead, and that I may even see her at times, when the remembrance of her is stifling me?'

Salvatierra was still under the influence of the agony he was witnessing, and under that of the little corpse jolting along on the cart, a few paces away. The melancholy poetry of the night, with its silence broken from time to time by cries of grief, flooded his whole soul. Yes, Alcaparrón would feel near him his dead love. Some strange, sweet breath from her would fan his face like a fragrance when he was digging the soil, and when from the furrow there came to his nostrils the fresh scent of the newly-stirred ground. Something, also, there would be of her soul in the ears of corn, in the poppies that tipped with red the golden harvest, in the birds that sang at dawn when the human herd went forth to work, in the brushwood of the hillside over which buzzed the insects.

'Who knows', continued the rebel, 'if in these very stars that beam upon us from above there is not something of the light of those eyes you loved so well, Alcaparrón?'

Meanwhile, the cart, swaying onwards, had left behind it the gipsy and Salvatierra, who in speaking had come to a halt. They could now no longer see it, but were guided by its distant creaking, and the wails of the family, who again began their plaintive chants.

'Farewell, Marie-Cruz,' cried the little ones, like the acolytes in some funeral rite. 'Our cousin has passed away from us.' And when they were silent for a moment, the voice of the old woman was heard, full of a harsh despair, like that of some priestess of sorrow. 'Our white dove has left us, our dear half-opened rose-bud! O Lord, why, oh, why, dost thou ever cut down the good ones ere their prime?'

RUBÉN DARÍO

(1867-1916)

Rubén Darío, born in the same year as Señor Blasco Ibáñez, is his direct opposite in mind and work. Though by birth a Nicaraguan, it was to the poets of Europe that he in early youth looked for inspiration, notably to Victor Hugo, Núñez de Arce, and Campoamor. In 1892 he came to Spain, where he lived for most of the rest of his life. Here, from 1898, the year of the Spanish-American War, and a time of reaction against naturalism and philosophic positivism, he became the leader of the younger school of poets, rousing those whom he influenced out of apathy into a new enthusiasm and a new conception of life.

‘The Apostle of Beauty’, as Darío has been well called, is a poet of delicate workmanship, of polished perfection, an artist seeing life mainly from the aesthetic side, and addressing himself to the cultured. The aristocratic swan, whose praises he has sung, is the bird that fitly typifies him. Much of his middle work shows the influence of the French *Symbolistes*, whose charm consists pre-eminently in their suggestiveness, in their atmosphere of mystery and incompleteness. He, like them, broke away from the old traditions of *technique*, and, influenced by Wagner’s music, sought to give each poem its special musical accompaniment, the special rhythm suited to its poetic idea.

Amongst Darío’s bold innovations in Spanish verse some are of questionable excellence. He has, for instance, made the caesural pause wholly independent of the sense pause, and has deliberately introduced dissonances interrupting the rhythm of the verse. Apart, however, from these and other experiments, he is admittedly the greatest master of versification of modern Spain. He has command over a great variety of metres, old and new; he has given new life and flexibility

to Spanish verse, and shown to the full the marvellous music of which it is capable.

Darío is not only a master of form and *technique*. His three volumes of poetry, *Prosas profanas*, *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, and *El canto errante*, reveal the true poet and a man of rich and complex nature. A sensualist in the poems of his earlier days, he sees the divine in the lower, material side of life as in the higher. Later on, a nobler spirituality shows itself in him, and sadness predominates over joy. His last years were given up to seclusion and silence.

As to the poems translated, *La dulzura del Angelus* is a fine, much admired sonnet of the *Symboliste* order; it is to be found amongst the *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, a volume which appeared in 1905. The other poems belong to *El canto errante*, published in 1907. The first one shows the meaning of the volume's name. *Revelation* is written in a spirit of pantheistic optimism, and finely expresses all nature penetrated with love. The third poem is the last of ten poems, forming an ode to Mitre, the Argentine patriot, who, as statesman and general, did so much between the years 1860 and 1890 in building up his country into a great and prosperous nation.

DULZURA DEL ANGELUS ¹

O Angelus divine! O sweetness free from stain,
Wafted by rustic bells in early morning air,
Made purer yet by breath of fervent, holy prayer,
By roses, song of nightingale, by dreams that reign

O'er a maid's gentle heart, unlike the soul profane
That has no faith in God. O tangled, golden skein
That evening winds behind dim panes in murky air,
Weaving the seamless web of all those ills we bear;

Ills born of carnal things, of perfumed wine, of pain,
Of bitterness that knows not joy, a sense forlorn
Of utter impotence to guide our prow aright;

¹ For original see Darío, *Obras escogidas*, edit. Gonzalez-Blanco, vol. ii, p. 159.

While in the midnight, lo, the boat is darkly borne
'Mid angry, surging waves, an orphan reft of light—
O bells, O sweet and holy bells of early morn !

WANDERING SONG ¹

Lo, the singer goes his way
Through the world, now grave, now gay !

Lo, he journeys evermore,
Be it peace or be it war !

Through the wondrous Indian land
Elephants bear him o'er the sand ;

Clad in silk in palanquin,
He in China's heart is seen ;

In the gondola of Venetia,
Or the motor of Lutecia ;

O'er the pampas and the plain
On his colt he rides amain ;

In canoe behold him now,
Or perchance upon the prow
Of steamer hasting o'er the main,
Or sleeping-car of rushing train.

Camel of the desert vast
Brings him into port at last ;

Or in sledge he well may ride
O'er the white plain, stretching wide ;

In the crystal silence bright,
Wherein shines the Northern Light ;

Or in fair and flowery meads,
Standing 'mid the flocks and seeds.

Now through London see him pass,
Or Jerusalem on an ass !

¹ *El canto errante*, Poem 1. *Biblioteca nueva de escritores españoles*, Madrid.

With the mails and bags he brings
 Song to all humanity,
 And his song has two great wings :
 Harmony, Eternity.

REVELATION ¹

Erewhile I stood upon the dizzy height
 Of a great headland, towering o'er the Sea,
 Breathed the keen air, and shouted with delight ;

Before me stretched the blue infinity,
 The mighty deep, and in the illumined West
 Sank the red Sun, all fire and mystery.

The briny air of Ocean filled my breast,
 And, as I drank thereof, upon me stole
 A sense of union, sense of joy unguessed ;

And powers mysterious communed with my soul,
 Making it theirs ; I saw light's inner shrine,
 While the great gates of Heaven did unroll.

From distant mountains came a voice benign,
 That told me Pan once more on Earth would dwell ;
 Full soon I heard his seven reeds divine.

Thereon the joyful news I needs must tell :
 ' 'Twas the great Giver of all life that spake,
 Pan, the immortal liveth, all is well.'

Then I beheld the wondrous double snake,
 Twining around the staff of Mercury,
 Who o'er the deep his way began to take.

Anon, with love new-wakened, toward the Sea,
 Thalassa, our great mother, moved mine eyes,
 And lo, she filled my heart with ecstasy !

Azure and amethyst, blent in wondrous wise,
 Silver and pearl I saw, and glittering gold,
 Saw all the daughter of Electra's prize ; (1)

¹ For original see *El canto errante*, p. 37. *Biblioteca nueva de escritores españoles*, Madrid.

And heard the hoarse notes, clamorous and bold,
 Rending the air from Triton's wreathed horn,
 The while a siren sang of bliss untold.

Then, with a voice on wings of love upborne,
 I cried: 'O mighty One, that from the sod
 Makest to grow the all-sustaining corn,

Thou, that hast brought thine own o'er seas dry-shod,
 Tell me, where dwellest Thou?' The answer came:
 'I dwell in thee and all things—I am God.'

TO MITRE¹

Take then thy rest in peace! Yet no, rest not, but rather
 Pursue thy glorious task through all eternity.
 Be thou our people's guide, be thou for ever father
 Of all things pure and fair—truth, virtue, equity.¹

What though we see thee not! Truly the wondrous story
 Of all thy high renown a monument will be
 That time can ne'er o'erthrow, so that thy name, thy glory,
 Vast as America's will light humanity.

NOTE TO RUBÉN DARÍO

(1) *Daughter of Electra's prize*. This is an obscure classical allusion. The word 'prize' is in the original 'conquest', and seems to be the Greek 'electron', meaning amber, or an amalgam of gold and silver.

¹ For original see *El canto errante*, p. 86.

JOSÉ MARTÍNEZ RUIZ

(b. 1876)

(*Azorín*)

In the closing years of the last century, while, under the influence of the French *Symbolistes*, a new school of poetry was beginning in Spain, a reaction set in among its prose-writers against the naturalism of which Señora Pardo Bazán and Señor Ibáñez are the chief representatives. Force is the most striking quality in Señor Ibáñez's work, and delicacy in that of the accomplished stylist, Señor Vallé-Inclán, as in that of Señor Ruiz, better known by his pseudonym of Azorín.

This latter, whose chief sources of inspiration seem to have been Flaubert and the Spanish classics, has developed a style of his own, which at its best has a charm of a highly finished and subtle kind. In his use of Arabic terms and revival of fine old words he has enlarged the vocabulary and given a new harmony to modern Spanish, though some may feel that his short sentences, his avoidance of the beautiful Spanish diminutives, and other peculiarities of style are not in accordance with the genius of the language.

Azorín achieved a reputation in the first years of the present century by three novels, of which the most admired is *Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo*. Since then he has abandoned this branch of writing for works of literary criticism, such as *Lecturas españolas* and *Al margen de los Clásicos*. In these he has the power of giving in a few words the essence of such men as Garcilasso, Luis of Leon, or Gongora. In speaking of modern literature he shows us how Galdós 'has made Spain live, has given it a national conscience'; at the same time he laments the lack of a keen spirit of inquiry in his country, saying that she needs (and may not the same be said of other nations?) 'thousands and

thousands of men eager to know and understand'. After the manner of Flaubert, Azorín has a delicate imagination in realizing the past, and in conjuring it 'aus Dunst und Nebel' before us. There is the breath of true poetry in the prose-poems in which he treats of it. *Castilla*, published in 1912, is the most finished volume of such imaginative essays, and of these the most finely worked up is that translated below. *Las Nubes* is a little masterpiece, and its artistic beauty repays careful study. In its very first sentence is a new and striking presentation of Calisto and Melibea. These tragic figures of ancient story are not, according to Azorín, cut off in early youth, but have reached their full maturity. Nevertheless, they retain a certain tragic significance, because they stand for human life and its fleetingness—Azorín's favourite theme. There is a magic silence in the house, as Melibea moves about it softly. Every detail given heightens the effect; and the tendency towards the inventory-style, elsewhere observable in the writer, is here kept within due bounds. The description of the garden is still more beautiful; it is a garden redolent of the south, and as full of soft loveliness as that imagined, some four hundred years earlier, by the author of *Celestina*. The lord of so much ordered beauty sits lost in thought as he gazes on the scene before him, and sees the hurrying clouds above, eternal yet unstable. In the closing lines the life and movement produced by the appearance of the youth form a fine contrast with the dreamy peace of the preceding moments. The dominating idea also is finely emphasized—that of the inexorable onward sweep of Time carrying away the individual, while love alone abides and for ever renews itself.

CLOUDS

(*Las Nubes*)¹

Calisto and Melibea were married, as the reader will know (if he has read *La Celestina*) a few days after the discovery of their stolen interviews in the garden. Calisto had become

¹ For original see *Castilla*, p. 91 (Madrid, 1912).

enamoured of the maiden, who was destined to be his wife, on a certain day when he entered her garden in pursuit of a falcon. Eighteen years ago it was. Twenty-three had been Calisto then. The two are living now as man and wife in Melibea's ancestral mansion; a daughter has been born to them, named like her grandmother, Alisa. From the broad verandah in the rear of the dwelling is to be seen the whole of the garden, wherein Melibea and Calisto had held their sweet colloquies of love. The house is large and stately; a carved staircase of stone ascends from the far end of the vestibule. Above are spacious retiring-rooms, silent and secluded bed-chambers, dimly-lighted galleries, and in the rear a small doorway with squares of glass in its upper part, giving a glimpse, as in *Las Meninas* of Velasquez, of an inner court bathed in light. A carpet of green branches and yellow fir-cones, worked on a crimson ground, is stretched over the floor of the chief drawing-room, where, on silken cushions, noble dames may sit at ease. Here and there are small divans covered with red leather, or folding-chairs with Moorish inlaid-work. A sculptured cabinet with painted and soft-lined drawers contains papers and jewels. In the centre of the apartment, on a walnut table with carved legs and frame-work, and with bars of wrought-iron, lies a delicately-fashioned box of chessmen with reliefs of ivory, mother-of-pearl, and silver; while in the crystal border of a broad mirror are reflected from a background of gold the elongated faces of a painting on wood, hanging on the wall that fronts the door of entrance.

All is peace and silence in the house. Melibea moves gently from room to room, sees to all things, thinks of all things. The presses are full of smooth and sweet-smelling linen, redolent of juicy quinces. In the pantry a sunbeam lights up a row of capacious and glazed Talaveran bowls. In the kitchen the brazen pots and pans hanging upon the dresser are as mirrors, and canakins and pitchers wrought by the hands of a craftsman of the potteries near by, display their round, smooth, and shining bellies. Over all things watches Melibea with untiring diligence; nothing escapes those soft green eyes of hers.

Ever and again, breaking upon the silence of the house, is heard the sweet and languorous sound of a harpsichord; it is Alisa, who is making music. Ere long upon the garden-paths is seen in gentle movement a maiden's tall and slender figure; it is Alisa walking amid the trees.

The garden is sweet to look upon and full of verdure. Oleanders and jasmine-plants grow side by side. At the foot of the never-changing cypresses rose-bushes lay their offering, fleeting as life itself, of their yellow, white, and crimson flowers. Three colours meet the eye where'er it turns: the intense blue of the sky, the white coating of the walls, and the green of the trees and shrubs. In the silence is heard, like diamond upon crystal, the shrill note of the swallows in their rapid flight through the deep indigo of the firmament. From the marble basin of a fountain trickles the water peacefully into the trough below. In the air rises the penetrating fragrance of the jasmynes, roses, and magnolias. 'Climb over my garden wall,' said Melibea in soft tones to Calisto, eighteen years ago.

Calisto is basking in the sun near one of the balconies, his elbow is on the arm of his chair, and his chin is in his hand. In his house are beautiful pictures; if he has a mind for music, his daughter, Alisa, delights his ear with sweet melodies, or if it is poetry that his soul desires, from his book-shelves he can cull the choicest poets of Spain and Italy. His fellow citizens love him well; the careful hands of Melibea tend him; he sees his race continued, though not by a son, yet for the present by a lovely girl of bright intelligence and gentle heart. Nevertheless, Calisto sits lost in thought, with his head resting in his hand. Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita, wrote in his book:

... 'Et crei la fabrilla

Que dis: Por lo pasado no estés mano en mejilla.'

'And I believed the saying which says: Do not for that which is past sit with your cheek in hand.'

Calisto has indeed small need to mourn the past; past and present are for him alike rich in blessings. Nothing exists to trouble or to sadden him; and yet Calisto, chin in hand, gazes thoughtfully at the distant clouds, drifting over the blue sky.

Clouds inspire us with a feeling of instability, and of eternity. Clouds are, like the sea, ever changing yet ever the same. While watching their flight we feel that our life and all things earthly are hastening into nothingness, while they, fugitive though they be, are yet eternal. The clouds, which we now see above us, were seen five hundred, one thousand, three thousand years ago by other men with the passions and the carking cares that we find in ourselves. When in a moment of happiness we would fain make time our captive, we find

weeks, months, and years already slipping away from us. But the clouds, the same yet not the same, each moment and each day are chasing one another over the heavens. Clouds there are, round, and full and dazzling white of colour, that in spring mornings float over the translucent sky. Others, like delicate gauze, spread themselves horizontally over a milky background; others are grey and veil grey distances; others, again, are crimson and gold in those sunsets of the great plains, sunsets interminable, full of deep melancholy. Others there are, like little fleeces, countless in number, and alike in form, revealing through some break in their midst a fragment of blue sky. Some go their way slowly and solemnly, some course along swiftly. Some again, ashy in colour, darken the whole face of the sky, casting upon the earth beneath a certain grey, opaque, and subdued light that lends a charm of its own to the autumnal landscape.

Hundreds of years after the day when Calisto is sitting chin in hand, a great poet, Campoamor, will dedicate to the clouds a canto in one of his poems named *Columbus*. 'Clouds', says the poet, 'mirror our own existence. What is existence but the sporting of clouds? . . . Life consists in seeing that which passes.' Yes, to live is to see things passing, passing as above the clouds up yonder. Rather might we say: 'To live is to see things returning, for ever returning, griefs, joys, and hopes, even as these clouds, distinct yet ever one, fugitive yet unchangeable.' Clouds are the image of Time. Can there be sensation more tragic than that of the fleetingness of Time, as when one sees in the present the past, and in the past the future?

In the garden, full of silence, is heard the shrill note of the swallows in their rapid flight. The water of the fountain peacefully trickles from the marble basin; at the foot of the cypresses short-lived roses, white, yellow, and crimson, open their petals to the light. The heavy fragrance of jasmine and magnolia perfumes the air. The green of the foliage contrasts with the white walls, and above both green and white is seen the indigo blue of the sky. Alisa is seated in the garden book in hand; her little feet peep from beneath her skirt of finest cloth. They are shod in black velvet slippers, trimmed with lace-edging and with buckles of burnished silver. Alisa's eyes are green, like those of her mother, her face is long rather than round. Who could find words for the softness and delicacy of her hands? Who could praise as it deserves the sweetness of her speech?

In the garden all is peace and silence. Above, in the sunshine, leaning against a balustrade, Calisto watches his daughter with a fond delight. Suddenly he sees a falcon, circling in rapid and frenzied movement amidst the trees. In hot pursuit of him appears an excited youth. Brought face to face with Alisa, he halts, lost in contemplation of her, smiles and begins to speak.

Calisto sees him from the verandah, and guesses his words. Far above him a few round, white clouds pass slowly over the blue sky.

ANTONIO MACHADO

(b. 1875)

Señor Antonio Machado is, with his elder brother, among the distinguished living poets of Spain. Standing aloof from any definite school of poetry, he professes indifference to the delicacies of style and execution, and his verses are for the most part rhymeless. In his *Campos de Castilla*, a volume of short poems published in 1912, he alludes to his childhood in a Seville *patio*, and to the twenty best years of his manhood, spent in Castile; he tells us also that he would rather leave behind him verse famous, like a gallant captain's sword, for the manliness of its strokes than for its chiselled perfection. Though not, like Núñez de Arce, a native of Castile, he resembles the elder poet in the intensity of his feeling for its austere beauty. One might wish that the *Campos de Castilla* contained no story of low crime to disturb the impression of melancholy peace of the spacious Castilian solitudes, for normal humanity is always more interesting than the diseased and abnormal. Apart from this, however, the book has a simple strength and beauty characteristic of the scenery of Castile, which is described by the poet as a land noble in sadness, a land of high table-lands, moors, and rocks, of decaying cities, of rustics without dance or song—'Castile once the fertile mother of captains, now barely productive of day labourers.'

The two following translations are of poems descriptive of the region of the Soria between Madrid and Saragossa—poems which render rustic life and the solemn beauty of the sunset hour no less impressively than Millet himself.

CAMPOS DE CASTILLA

(*Campos de Soria*, III)

An undulating country, where the roads
Do now conceal the travellers, astride
Their dusky-coated asses,
Now, in the crimson light of dying day,
Uplift in full relief their rustic forms,
Darkening the golden canvas of the West.
Climb now yon mount, and from those jagged peaks
Where dwells the eagle, gaze upon the scene ;
And see the leaden plains and silvery slopes
All bathed in carmine, shot with steely grey,
Circled by mountains of deep violet,
With snowy summits blushing like the rose.

(IV)

Lo, these are they that move 'twixt land and sky :
Two oxen, slowly ploughing
Upon a hillside, touched by Autumn's breath,
The while between their sturdy heads, low bent
Beneath the heavy yoke,
A basket hangs woven of reeds and broom—
An infant's rustic cradle ;
And, following the team,
A man, who bows him down towards the earth,
Likewise a woman, who in the gaping furrows
Scatters the precious seed.
Beneath a cloud of crimson and of flame
See in the West, all liquid gold and green.
Their shadows slowly lengthen as they pass.

The third poem by Señor Antonio Machado, of which I have attempted a rendering, is a beautiful tribute to a beautiful personality—Don Francisco Giner de los Rios, who died in the spring of 1915 at the age of seventy-five. A brief account of this latter must be given, both for the better understanding

of the poem, and for the purpose of giving some idea of the higher life in Spain, of which he was a centre.

Francisco Giner was a scholar, a distinguished professor, a philosopher, a reformer, and the author of various books; it was his personality, however, that was the essential part of him, and it is by its influence that he will live in the hearts and memories of his followers. The many who loved and revered him saw in him something of the wisdom of Socrates and the sweetness of the Saint of Assisi. He had the Socratic gift of inspiring and teaching by conversation, and this gift he himself recognized as a vocation and consecrated to high purposes. He was like St. Francis, not only in the severe simplicity of his life and the depth of his religious sense, but also in his joyous vitality, his wide charity, his love of nature, and his enthusiastic appreciation of the worth and beauty of life. He had also much of the self-effacing humility of the saint whom Dante loved so well. Life with him was one long, eager journey towards the light, and as his own mental horizon widened, so he expanded that of his pupils and followers. He understood the art of living- 'To live well', he used to say, 'is the one supreme duty, but in doing so, let us not forget to gather the flowers that meet us by the wayside.' A gifted teacher, in his large humanity there was nothing of the pedant or the pedagogue. He was a man, and did not claim to be a superman. An Andalusian, he had the gaiety and genial courtesy of his native province, as well as the air of distinction of the high-bred Spanish gentleman. As I write, I see him, as it was my privilege to do, two years before his death, sitting in one of the pleasant gardens of Spain, and telling me in sweet and gracious words of a visit to Oxford, where, as a guest of the late Professor Jowett, he learnt to love England and English culture. His eyes were full of inspiration, and his face, as one of his friends has said, had the spiritual intensity of Ribera's saints.

Francisco Giner was a Liberal in politics as in religion. In 1875 he joined other university professors in a protest against the Government's interference in their liberty of speech. For

this act he and his colleagues were deprived of their professorships, and, moreover, Giner was imprisoned for a time in Cadiz. Here the British Consul offered to intervene in his favour, but this he declined, saying, with a noble patience, that he looked to Spain to liberate him in her own good time.

On his return to Madrid, where he spent the greater part of his life, Francisco Giner founded the 'Institución libre de Enseñanza', where he and other ejected professors might teach according to the dictates of conscience. Juan Valera, Salmerón, Azcárate, Costa, and others gave their support to the Institution, but Giner was its soul, and for over forty years it has played an active part in all that is progressive in the moral and intellectual life of Spain.

Francisco Giner was a fervent patriot, and was convinced that the evils he saw in the national life could best be combated by education. With all his radicalism he was an advocate of slow and gradual development rather than of violent measures. The Institution became under him a school, where the youth of both sexes together receive an education on the widest lines. Though independent of Church and State, it is hostile to neither; its whole atmosphere is profoundly religious, though it teaches no religious creed. The character of the future generation is built up by the harmonious development of mind and body. In the great Prado gallery the spectacle of bright-faced pupils following the greatest art-critic of Spain, as he opens their eyes to its treasures, has long been a familiar one to Madrileños, or the same band may be seen starting off for a climb in the Guadarrama mountains, a favourite haunt of their late master.

It is, in fact, largely to Giner that Spain owes a reform in education now accepted by her most enlightened men. But the Institution is something more than a school or college. It is a spiritual community of high-minded men and women (parents, teachers, and former pupils), seeking through education the spiritual awakening of their country. Their singleness of purpose and the lofty hopes that animate them were those of the Master, whom Señor Machado's poem celebrates.

TO DON FRANCISCO GINER DE LOS RIOS

Now, when the Master left us,
There came that morning's light,
Whispering : ' Three days have fled,
And lo, my brother Francis worketh not !
Died he ? ' We only know
That he went hence upon a shining path,
And spake : ' Mourn me with works,
Mourn me with hopes, I would no dole of tears ;
Only be good. Be, as I strove to be
While in this life—a soul.
Live on, life hath no end ;
The dead alone shall die, and shadows pass ;
Who sowed is reaping now, who lived yet liveth ;
Let the good anvils sound, let bells be dumb ! '
Then to a purer light
The brother of the light of dawn went forth,
Forth from the scene of toils
That bright and glad old man of saintly life.

. . . Yea, comrades, let us bring
His body to the mountains,
Up to those azure heights
Where Guadarrama towers.
Yonder are shadowy gorges
With pine-trees, where the winds make melody.
Let his great heart repose
Beneath this sacred oak,
Where beds of thyme scatter their fragrance sweet,
And golden butterflies play.
'Tis there of old our Master
Dreamt his sweet dream of Spain's new blossoming.

FRANCISCO VILLAESPESA

(b. 1877)

Señor Villaespesa, whose earlier works reveal the influence of Rubén Darío, is a poet of great lyric power and polished beauty of style. Besides a few plays, he has published many volumes of lyric poetry—*Intimidades*, *Tristitiae Rerum*, and others. *In Memoriam* (published in 1910), in which the original of the first translation appears, contains lyrics in memory of the poet's wife. In it are beautiful elegies, together with recollections of a delicate and ethereal personality, and visions of the departed one bringing consolation from the other world. The poet shows a special power of expressing the desolating sense of the emptiness of life that bereavement brings with it.

IN MEMORIAM¹

Gently ever didst thou come and go,
Like a phantom, floating in mid air;
Only silken rustlings, soft and low,
Told my heart, beloved, that thou wast there.

From the book I raised mine eyes awhile,
E'en that they might on thy beauty feast,
See thy red lips part, and see thee smile,
At 'the tedious work that never ceased'.

Now as then, when lonely watch I keep,
Some slight sound I think thy garment's sweep,
And I lift a pallid face forlorn;

But the lamp alone reveals, alas!
Bathed in bitter tears, by sorrow worn,
My poor image mirrored in the glass.

¹ *In Memoriam*, Madrid, p. 35.

THE HESPERIDES¹

'Garden of the Hesperides, so fair,
Garden divine, flooded in golden light,
Dream or reality, oh tell me where
The path lies hidden to thy portal bright!'

Thus sighing, spake the traveller forlorn,
And sank upon his knees with bleeding feet.
'Ever to seek that garden art thou born,
But never shalt thou find its marvels sweet;

Never, alas, shalt find! This mark thou well,
Because within thy soul alone they dwell,
These cherished treasures of thy fantasy;

In vain thou sendest forth thy longing gaze,
The prose of life is with thee all thy days,
And far from thee hath fled life's poesy!'

¹ *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*, p. 418.

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